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# Poet Lore

VOLUME XXV

WINTER, 1914

NUMBER VI

## THE BRIDE OF THE MOOR\*

BY AUGUST STRAMM†

*Authorized Translation from the German*  
CHARACTERS

MARUSCHKA.

LASZLO.

LASZLO'S FATHER.

MARUSCHKA'S PARENTS.

THE MOOR

*The stars lament.  
The windbreath whispereth  
Whence? Whither?  
Thou, thou? I, thou?*

### I. MORNING

*In the hut through door and window the moor shineth.*

*Laszlo.*— Thou dost belong to me!

*Maruschka.*— I belong to no one!

*Laszlo.*— My right!

*Maruschka.*— Thou hast no right!

\*These two plays by August Stramm are published through the courtesy of, and in co-operation with, *Der Sturm*, the German fortnightly review of art and literature, which has done so much to encourage new tendencies and offer them a medium of expression. The plays are specially important as a revelation of the profound influence which the work of John Synge is exerting on Continental writers.— THE EDITORS.

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# Poet Lore

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SIX COMPLETE PLAYS

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**Sancta Susanna & The Bride of the Moor.**

By AUGUST STRAMM

**Shambles.**

By HENRY T. SCHNITTKIND

**War.**

By J. E. FILLMORE

**HUMILIS**

HIS ART, HIS STORY, HIS POEMS

*The Poet Lore Company  
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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1914

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## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF POET LORE

With this number, POET LORE finishes its first quarter century.

Here are some of the big things that POET LORE has done. This list, without further comment, shows why POET LORE is the only magazine in America that is indispensable to all those readers who are on the lookout for *new* genius the moment it appears, instead of waiting to fall into line after this genius has been discovered by others. Read this list carefully.

In 1889 POET LORE pointed out the supreme importance of Ibsen's dramas. It spoke of Ibsen then as "below no one but Shakespeare" to a nation that then only had heard enough of him to jeer. In the same year it gave its readers a review of Shakespeare's influence on Japanese literature. That was eighteen years before anybody else in this country even knew that there was such a thing as a great literature in "barbarous" Japan.

In 1890 POET LORE discovered and introduced to this country the lyric poet Mistral, whom other periodicals did not begin to notice until *fourteen years later*, when he shared with Échégaray the Nobel prize for literature in 1904.

In 1891 POET LORE made its readers acquainted with the work of Strindberg, who has but lately become generally known to the literary public of America.

In 1892 POET LORE brought to America some masterpieces of Bohemian literature, and it published Björnson's play, "A Glove," in the original Norwegian version of *En Hanske*, authorized by Björnson himself. It differs strikingly from the version made later for Germany.

In 1893 POET LORE published Maeterlinck's "The Blind," *which was the first publication of any of Maeterlinck's works in English*. In the same year it printed a *critique* whose very title is sufficiently significant of its priority: "Maurice Maeterlinck, Dramatist of a New Method."

In 1894 POET LORE published Maeterlinck's "The Seven Princesses" and "Pelléas and Mélisande."

In 1895 there appeared in POET LORE, Maeterlinck's "Alladine and Palomides"; and an appreciation of the genius of Robert Bridges was printed.

In 1897 POET LORE brought to America another of the now world-famous dramatists, Sudermann, giving to English readers

their first glimpse of him in that little masterpiece, "Teja," from his "Morituri."

In 1898 POET LORE published "The Sunken Bell." *This was the first English translation of any of Hauptmann's plays.*

As early as in 1899 POET LORE contained a story of Selma Lagerlof, whose name even now, after she has won the Nobel prize, is unfamiliar to all except pioneer readers.

In 1900, Échégaray, the great Spanish dramatist, who in 1904 won the Nobel prize, was already well known to the readers of POET LORE.

In 1903 the readers of POET LORE were made acquainted with the unusual genius of Brieux, whom the general educated public in this country did not learn to know till about a year ago.

In 1904 POET LORE began the publication of Gorky's plays, and also introduced its readers to the hidden treasures of Icelandic literature.

In 1905 POET LORE was as usual first among the pioneers in recognizing the real significance of the new Irish literary drama by the publication of plays by Synge and Hyde.

In 1906 POET LORE presented the dramatic work of Schnitzler in English for the first time.

In 1907 Andreyev was first made known to America by POET LORE, and in giving, then, "To the Stars," and his later masterpiece, "King Hunger," when, that was written, POET LORE has introduced his finest dramas. In the same year, D'Annunzio's noblest play, "The Daughter of Jorio," and the first English translation of any of Bracco's plays — "The Hidden Spring" appeared in authorized version. Bracco's "Phantasms" followed. Frank Wedekind's work was also made known this year to POET LORE readers.

POET LORE has introduced to this country no less than fifty-four European dramatists and eighty-six dramas. Of these dramatists, all of whom were unknown previous to the time of the publication of their work in POET LORE, practically everyone has subsequently become world famous.

POET LORE has gathered the artistic gems of *every civilized country under the sun*, at their first gleam, and offered them to the American public in advance of any other publication in this country. And continuing the same policy up to the present time, POET LORE is introducing to its readers *to-day* the unknown geniuses who are to become world famous *to-morrow*.

*Laszlo.*—Thy word.

*MARUSCHKA* (*breathes*).

*Laszlo* (*drawing his knife*).—Beware!

*Maruschka* (*takes a firebrand from the hearth*).—Come on!

*Maruschka* (*takes the milk from the fire and strains it*).

*Laszlo.*—He doth not fetch thee!

*Maruschka.*—If I do not wish!

*Laszlo.*—Thou wilt not wish!

*Laszlo's Father* (*on the stool by the fire*).— . . . She doth not change.

*Maruschka* (*sets down the milk for the old man*).—Thou hast never spoken of it to me — for how many years—?

*Laszlo's Father.*—I don't count them!

*Maruschka.* — 'Twas summer — winter — not at all — it was sun — storm —

*Laszlo's Father* (*takes his pipe from his teeth*).—They often change —

*Maruschka.*—What was my dress?—What did I do?—Did I run?—Did I speak—?

*Laszlo's Father* (*drinks*).—Children — who didn't run — I never took!

*Maruschka.*—Children —

*Laszlo's Father* (*drinks and arranges himself comfortably*).

*Maruschka* (*sits down and stares into the fire*).—Dost thou know — that I am his child—?

*Laszlo's Father.*—I never saw him!

*Maruschka.*—Thou didst never see him —

*Laszlo's Father.*—He saw the sign on thy brow —

*Maruschka*, (*her hand wanders slowly over her left eyebrow*).

*Laszlo's Father.*—Thou must know it!

*Maruschka.*—What — must —

*Laszlo's Father.*—Thy blood!

*Maruschka (stands up).*— My blood —! ? — My blood —! ? —  
And yet thou hast robbed me of it? —!

*Laszlo's Father.*— We are all robbed somewhere — all —  
and abandoned.

*Maruschka.*— . . .

*Laszlo's Father.*— Not all find their father again.

*Maruschka.*— I shall have to chastise thee!

*Laszlo's Father.*— Thy kind father ——

*Maruschka.*— and therefore thou hast deceived me? ! (*Tears  
a lasso whip from the wall.*)

*Laszlo's Father.*— I have brought thee up — on the moor!

*Maruschka (whips the old man with heavy blows).*— Deceived  
— deceived ——

(*LASZLO'S FATHER holds out his arm and flees limping through  
the doorway. LASZLO stands jeering at the doorpost.*)

*Maruschka.*— Thou dost laugh —— ?

*Laszlo (his pipe in his teeth).*— It does n't hurt the old dog  
any! (*He grasps her wrist as if he wished to tear it off.*)

(*MARUSCHKA craftily frees herself, springs back and raises  
the whip.*)

*Laszlo (laughingly grasps the knife).*— Come on!

(*MARUSCHKA lets the whip fall slowly. Breathless listening.  
LASZLO laughs shortly.*)

*Maruschka.*— He driveth many —— !

*Laszlo.*— He doth not drive!

(*MARUSCHKA flings herself on the ground and listens. LASZLO  
makes a motion towards her.*)

*Maruschka (springs high).*— I — I — do not know these  
sounds!

*Laszlo (grins).*— He driveth!

*Maruschka.*— He doth not drive!

*Laszlo.*— His carriage hath no horses.

*Maruschka.*— No horses ——

*Laszlo.*— Something doth drive it, I don't know what.

*Maruschka.*— Thou didst see it?

*Laszlo.*— I saw it — beyond the moor — where the great roads go — wide — in the distance — to the domes and towers — to the lights in the night ——

*Maruschka.*— . . .

*Laszlo.*— It chaseth — and rattleth — and clattereth — and whirleth. (*Laughs and throws his pipe in the corner.* *MARUSCHKA clasps her hands.* *LASZLO buries his hands in his pockets.*)

*Maruschka.*— Let us flee—!

*Laszlo (laughs and steps behind her, softly).*— *Maruschka!* (*MARUSCHKA slips by him.* *LASZLO, barring the door.*) He doth not approach us — the moor would swallow him up there — his wagon is heavy — he must go on foot like thou and I — he doth not fetch thee . . . !

*Maruschka.*— He — doth — not — fetch — me ——

(*An automobile halts, panting in the distance.*)

*Laszlo.*— Hearest thou? It rattleth — mad — rrrrrrr! — the men yonder — they have no morning and noon and night — when the sun appeareth — they know not one another — wild — pell-mell — heaven archeth them not — always only in patches — walls — corners — roads — hard and full of stones — criss-cross — thou wouldst not find thy way through!

*Maruschka (quivering in her whole body).*— Father ——

*Laszlo (laughs silently and goes out).*— He doth not fetch thee!

(*MARUSCHKA starts up, shuts in wild haste the door and windowpanes, bolts the shutters and the door, pushes the footstool and the table against it, cowers down and leans convulsively against the door.*)

*A Pair of Sunbeams (tremble through the cracks)* . . . (*There is a knock.*)

## II. NOON

*Before the hut. The heavy reed roof is bowed to the ground. High elder bushes make the walls green. Maize fields glow on the moor.*

*The Father (knocks).*— Thy father ——

*Maruschka (within).*— I know thee not!

*The Mother (knocks).*— Thy mother ——

*Maruschka.*— I know thee not!

*The Parents.*— Thou wilt learn to know us!

*The Mother.*— Open!

*Maruschka.*— This is my house!

*The Mother.*— Thy — house ——

*Maruschka.*— I have raised it — I have roofed — and patched it ——

*The Mother (gazing at the roof).*— Thou hast roofed it ——

*The Father (shakes the post).*— It doth not stand firm!

*Maruschka.*— I am safe here from storm and weather ——

*The Mother.*— No less with us ——

*The Father.*— I have treasures ——

*Maruschka.*— I care not for treasures!

*The Mother.*— I love thee!

*Maruschka.*— I fear thee!

(*LASZLO sits on the springhead, with a clear laugh takes a gun in his hand, and shoots into the maize field.*)

*The Parents.*— . . .

*Maruschka.*— Laszlo!

*Laszlo (comes out of the field and laughs).*— A kite! (*Throws the bird on the ground and sits down again.*)

*The Father (knocks).*— Mara ——

*The Mother (knocks).*— Maria ——

*Laszlo (calls).*— Maruschka!

*Maruschka.*— No! ! !

(*The MOTHER knocks.*)

*Maruschka.*— You would take me away from my moor ——

*The Father.*— We would lead you into a garden!

*Maruschka.*— What is that — a garden? !

*The Mother.*— A garden ——

*The Father.*— A garden ——

*The Mother.*— A moor — with high — shady trees — with meadows — soft and cool — flowers — roses — oh! — blossoms — oh! — wonderful odors ——

*Maruschka.*— My flowers are fragrant also — I will not take yours.——

*The Father.*— Thou wilt only have — what thou dost wish.——

*Maruschka.*— Then I will stay here——!

*The Mother.*— Stay ——

*Maruschka.*— You shall stay here!

*The Mother.*— We ——

*The Father.*— We must go home.——

*Maruschka.*— Your home——?

*The Mother.*— Our — home ——

*Maruschka.*— My home is the moor!

*The Mother.*— The — moor ——

*Maruschka.*— So I do not belong to you!

*The Father.*— Thou art my flesh!

*The Mother.*— Thou art my blood!

*Maruschka.*— You have guarded me badly.

*The Mother.*— We have guarded thee ——

*The Parents.*— As our soul ——

*Maruschka.*— What is — that — our soul?

*The Mother.*— What—is—? That which leads thee to us——!

*Maruschka (cries out suddenly).*— I am afraid near you!

*The Parents.*— We love thee! ——

*Maruschka.*— I do not feel — I do not feel — I do not feel anything for you — get out of my way — out of my way — I will see the moor ——

(*The PARENTS step aside.*)

*The Father.*— Thou wilt see — so often wilt thou ——

*Maruschka.*— So often?— So will I always!

*The Mother.*— Thou wilt not want ——

*The Father.*— Thou wilt not miss it ——

*Maruschka (cries out).*— You will not force me ——!

*The Father.*— Thou shalt be free — free.

*Maruschka.*— Then I must be ashamed of my will —!

*The Father.*— Thy will is our will.

*Maruschka.*— They would despise me.

*The Father.*— Thou wouldst be respected!

*The Parents.*— Thou art our child!

*Maruschka.*— Here I am respected — and nobody's child.

*The Mother.*— We — are — all — omebody's child —

*Maruschka.*— I — feel — so — forsaken —

(*LASZLO straightens up.*)

*The Mother.*— Child!

*The Father.*— Open —!

(*LASZLO folds his arms and turns towards the old people.*)

*Maruschka.*— I am not coming!

*The Mother.*— Thou *art* coming!

*Maruschka.*— No — no!

(*LASZLO steps threateningly towards the old people.*)

*The Father.*— We do not force thee —

*Maruschka.*— So long I have not — lived!

*The Mother.*— Thou wilt first live —

*Maruschka.*— No! — no!

*The Mother.*— Free thou comest — free —

*The Father.*— As thou dost wish —

*Maruschka.*— Then I wish a space — a little space of time.

*The Father.*— Thou mayst have it — as long as thou dost wish —

*Maruschka.*— Until night —

*The Father.*— So soon?!

*The Mother.*— So long?!

*Maruschka.*— Until night!

*The Father.*— Until night!

*The Mother.*— Now open —



*Maruschka.*— . . . .

*The Father.*— Now open.

*Laszlo.*— Maruschka!—Open!—

(MARUSCHKA opens. *Stands immovable, staring erect in the doorway. White shining clouds tower across the heavens and hunt dark shadows across the moor. The PARENTS stand gazing at MARUSCHKA.*)

*The Mother* (goes with outstretched arms toward her and clasps them around her).— My — child!

*Maruschka* (with terror-thrilled voice).— Laszlo!

(LASZLO seizes her hand and wildly snatches her away from her PARENTS. MARUSCHKA sinks against him, exhausted.)

### III. EVENING

*The horse-paddock. Alders on the pond. Heavy sun-glow clouds turn to a drab gray.*

*Maruschka* (leans exhausted on the edge of the paddock and breathes heavily).— I have galloped over the moor. (Stretches her arms in despair.) Walls. (Gazes at the clouds.) Yonder — yonder —

*Laszlo* (hands in his pockets and pipe in his teeth).— Clouds —

(MARUSCHKA falls on her knees and clasps her hands in front of her eyes.)

*Laszlo* (runs to her and bends over her).— Maruschka — I am here!

(MARUSCHKA takes her hands from her eyes and stares at him. She springs up and embraces him.)

*Laszlo* (flings away his pipe, grasps her with his fist in her hair, bends her head backwards and kisses her wildly).— I — am — beside — thee! I —!

*Maruschka* (kisses him again with frantic ardor).— Laszlo!

*Laszlo.*— Thou dost love me — thou dost love me — thou dost love me still — I know it — I knew it —

*Maruschka (frees herself suddenly and stares terrified at herself).*— I love thee — thee — yes — no — the moor — still — I love thee — thee — thee — thee only — (*bridles invisibly and cries in fearful anxiety*) — and I love still a little all other — dreadful — I do not understand — I perish — I —

*Laszlo.*— Why dost thou toil — ? — Thou art free — quite free — nothing holds thee — if thou wilt not —

*Maruschka (cries out).*— And I will not — no — I will not — never will I wish — oh —

(*Grasshoppers chirp in the straw.*)

*Maruschka.*— . . .

*Laszlo.*— Grasshoppers!

*Maruschka (laughs in a forced manner and tries desperately to compose herself).*— I was startled — the air is so sticky — isn't it? — So sticky — isn't it?! — *Laszlo* —

*Laszlo.*— It is soft and warm!

*Maruschka.*— No — no — yes — still — *Laszlo* — yes — it doth all belie me — ! — The straw — the straw — see — it whistheth — and rustleth — besides — it stirreth not — the spring — (*she bows*) — it shineth not — the sky — see — rigid — dumb. — They spoke before — the clouds — oh — (*She cowers down and veils her sight.*)

*Laszlo.*— A storm is coming — like every day — ! — (*Dust-whirls stretch to the clouds; the moor darkens.*)

*Maruschka (cries out).*— All — so I never saw it! — I am no longer — *Laszlo* —

*Laszlo (bends over her and raises her).*— *Maruschka!*

*Maruschka (rises and gazes in all directions across the moor; her glance remains clinging to the sheen on the water. She presses close to LASZLO, whispers in the deepest anxiety of terror).*— *Laszlo* — the water — *Laszlo* — dark — the eye — whose? whose? — my father! — deep — immeasurable — so dark — clear — the whole moor shineth in it — and — (*goes to the water, grasps the alderbush and bows over the sheen on the water*) — Where is — my home — ?

*Laszlo (springs after her, seizes her and roughly pulls her back on the firm ground, which she strikes hard. He, cruelly wild, grasps her hair and shoulder violently).—*Thou art mad.

*Maruschka (stiffens under his grasp).—*I'll not get away.

*Laszlo.—*I'll not let thee.

*Maruschka.—*I'll not get away! I love thee!

*Laszlo (pulls her wildly to and fro).—*I hold thee — I hate thee. — I enslave thee. —

*Maruschka (casts up her arms to him and pulls his head down to hers).—*I — love thee — I love thee — thou wild — thou cruel one. — Yes — forsake me not. (*Raises herself to LASZLO.*)

*Laszlo (frees her).—*We belong together.

*Maruschka (combs her hair with her hands, and stiffens in the movement).—*He — will — come and look at me —

*Laszlo.—*He will not look at you!

*Maruschka.—*He will — he hath such great strength. — Flee? —

*Laszlo.—*Thou needst not flee.

*Maruschka.—*Flee —

*Laszlo.—*I — will — kill — him!

*Maruschka.—*. . .

*Laszlo.—*I'll kill him!

*Maruschka.—*. . .

*Laszlo.—*I —

*Maruschka (seizes him and shakes him with wild laughter).—*Laszlo — Laszlo — thou wilt not kill him — no — no — no — thou wilt not kill him —!

*Laszlo (shakes her off).—*Woman!

*Maruschka (stops suddenly and listens. Dust clouds shriek on the moor).—*The — moor calleth —! (*With suddenly recovered courage.*) — I will kill him! — I will kill him! — I!

(*MARUSCHKA grasps LASZLO's arm and rushes away with him.*)

#### IV. NIGHT



*In the hut. The hearthfire has gone out. Window shutters*



and door are closed. An oil lamp flickers on the earthen hearth.

MARUSCHKA and LASZLO dig a grave as long as a man in front of the hearth. MARUSCHKA pauses and stares at the spade standing up in the void. LASZLO pauses and stares at MARUSCHKA. He pulls a little tuft of heather out of his waistcoat and offers it to her.

Maruschka.— . . .

Laszlo.— For the glance!

Maruschka (grasps the tuft hastily, puts it in her bosom, and digs again).— Where — is —? —

Laszlo.— The old man—? — The moor is wide!

(MARUSCHKA and LASZLO dig. LASZLO springs into the grave, which reaches up to his breast. He turns round in it and jumps out again, and laughs shortly and maliciously.)

Maruschka.— Is it raining yet?

(LASZLO goes to the door and opens it a crack, listens and softly steals back. MARUSCHKA throws down the spade. LASZLO, chuckling, gives her the knife. MARUSCHKA snatches it hastily and conceals it. The door moves.)

Maruschka.— . . .

Laszlo (goes to the door and touches it).— The wind.

(MARUSCHKA cowers in the most remote corner of the hut.)

Laszlo.— . . .

Maruschka.— It — bloweth — out of — the — earth!

Laszlo.— Thou wouldst not know it.

Maruschka (shuddering).— I — I — (cries out) — it shuddereth at me —

Laszlo.— Everything shuddereth!

Maruschka (bows her head).— And on again.— Where I am so happy —? ! —

Laszlo.— Thou art not obliged to go?

Maruschka.— . . .

Laszlo.— Maruschka!

Maruschka (cries out).— I must!!! I must!!!

Laszlo.— He must go!!!!!!

*Maruschka.*— Go! Go! *He can never go!*

(*LASZLO snatches away the dagger. MARUSCHKA struggles with him. LASZLO flings her in the corner.*)

*Maruschka.*— Kill me!!!— Kill me!!!— Thou canst not kill him!!!

(*LASZLO laughingly tries the edge of the dagger.*)

*Maruschka.*— He doth not live there—he doth not live there!— here!— here the knife!— here! (*She tears her shawl from her breast.*) Thou drivest him out no longer.

(*LASZLO leaps to her and wildly kisses her naked breast. MARUSCHKA thrusts him back and frees herself from him. Motionless listening. LASZLO creeps to the window and peeps through the crack, springs back and seizes the knife.*)

*Maruschka (whispers).*— He— doth pass—he— doth pass— (*Steps brush against the outside of the door. MARUSCHKA sinks down crouching, her whole body trembling.*)


*Laszlo (in a loud whisper).*— Maruschka— dost thou love me?!

*Maruschka (stammering).*— Yes— yes— yes!

(*Knock. LASZLO extinguishes the lamp and stands ready to spring. Knock.*)

*Maruschka (cries out).*— Yes— yes!!!

(*The door opens, impenetrable darkness yawns in. Silence. A low-sounding thunder, then a flash of lightning lights up the moor as clear as day. Heat lightning on all sides. The FATHER, wrapped in a broad mantle, stands in the doorway and stretches his arms toward MARUSCHKA. LASZLO flies loose at him. MARUSCHKA springs high and strikes him on the arm. A short struggle. MARUSCHKA wrests the dagger from LASZLO and stabs him in the breast. LASZLO falls in a short leap without a sound. The FATHER enters. MARUSCHKA stands stiff and erect. The FATHER wishes to step toward LASZLO, but his glance remains riveted on the grave. He turns to MARUSCHKA and looks at her. MARUSCHKA breaks down silently.*)



## V. DAWN

*Near the hut hedged fruit trees, vegetables and flowerbeds. A woodfire glows on the ground. Dawn on the moor. Larks trill in the distance. A lark strikes up loudly near by and ascends.*

*Maruschka (rises on the bank beside the hut).— Who — who is dead? — I — I — who am I? — (She lays her hand on her forehead and stares across the moor.)*

*(The FATHER stands beside her and lays his hand on her shoulder.)*

*Maruschka.— The heather—?!— I do not see it.— (Cries out.)— Fire!— Fire doth swing in it—!!!*

*The Father.— Calmly — Calmly — my child!— It will soon be day! (The sky brightens.)*

*Maruschka (shrinks into herself and cowers on the bank).— Who art thou? — Who doth speak? — I know thee not —*

*The Father.— I have sought thee — sought thee — I have wandered.*

*Maruschka.— I do not understand thee! — I cannot understand thee.— Who art thou —?*

*The Father.— Look at me.—*

*(MARUSCHKA shrinks, but raises her eyes to him. A falling star glides down and dies away. MARUSCHKA veils her sight, moaning, in her skirt.)*

*The Father.— My — child!*

*(MARUSCHKA lets her hands fall, rises and gazes across the moor, where the falling star disappeared. The wind plays in her loosened hair and in the bushes and leaves on the moor.)*

*Maruschka.— From heaven — to the moor —*

*(A white streak of mist rises and sinks.)*

*Maruschka (casts herself on the grass wildly sobbing and kisses the flowers).— Pearls — tears — tears — they weep — they weep —*

*The Father (always beside her, bends over her).— The dew doth bring new life.—*

# SANCTA SUSANNA

## THE SONG OF A MAY NIGHT

BY AUGUST STRAMM\*

*Authorized translation from the German by Edward J. O'Brien*

### CHARACTERS

SUSANNA.

CLEMENTIA.

A MAID SERVANT.

A MAN SERVANT.

CHOIR OF NUNS.

A SPIDER.

NIGHTINGALES, MOONLIGHT, WIND AND BLOSSOMS.

*Scene: The Convent Church.*

*Trembling streaks of moonlight; in the depths of the high altar the perpetual red light is shining; in the wall in front to the left of the great image of the Crucified a frugal candle is burning. SUSANNA lies in prayer, on the left of the flower-adorned altar of Heaven's King, who stands in the rectangular niche beside the crucifix altar. Her forehead rests on the lowest step. Her arms are spread over the upper steps.*

*Clementia (only a step behind her).— Sancta Susanna! (She lays her hand on SUSANNA's shoulder. SUSANNA gets up.)*

*Clementia.— The night has begun!—*

*Susanna (with her soul far away).— It sounds — a note —*

*Clementia.— The organ sounds behind!*

*Susanna.— To me it is — like the ringing — of bottomless deeps — of heavenly heights —*

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*Clementia.*— You come thence. You were with God!

*Susanna (in meditation).*— I — was —

*Clementia.*— You are ill.— You pray — you scarcely live any longer on this earth.— You have a body also.

*(SUSANNA rises and stares at her, frightened.)*

*Clementia (lays her arm on her).*— Come!

*(The church clock strikes one stroke, clearly, to mark the half hour; the nightwind shakes the windows, the branches rustle.)*

*Clementia (to herself).*— Ave Maria!—

*Susanna (starting).*— Who spoke?!—

*Clementia.*— The nightwind flung the blossoms against the windows —

*Susanna.*— It called something.

*Clementia.*— The church clock struck.— I said the Ave —

*(A window opens, the nightwind breaks in singing in a tone that dies away; leaves and branches rustle and whisper down to the whispering rustle of the shadowy floor. SUSANNA turns with hands stretched down behind from her body, to the dark choir, silent, rigid.)*

*Clementia.*— A pane was opened.— I will close it!

*Susanna.*— Let it — *(She breathes hard.)*

*Clementia.*— The great elderbush, do you smell its blossoms? *(She inhales the fragrance.)*— Even here it exhales its fragrance! It blooms in white and red umbels—! I will have it uprooted—to-morrow — if it disturbs you!

*Susanna.*— It does not disturb me — it blooms! —

*(A female voice chokes in moaning desire.)*

*Clementia.*— The meadow ridge under the blossoms! I will forbid the way.—

*Susanna (listens).*— She — is — not — alone —! *(CLEMENTIA crosses herself. SUSANNA breathes hard, goes to the cross, while stiff with emotion.)* If — she — would — come?!—

*Clementia.*— Who?!—

*Susanna.*— . . .

*(CLEMENTIA folds her frightened hands.)*



*Susanna (her hand heavy on the pew).— I — would — speak — to her — in conscience —*

*(CLEMENTIA folds her hands, bows her head and goes. A spring door rattles softly.)*

*Susanna.— The —— (The terrible scream of a woman dies away; the branches rustle. SUSANNA quivers.)— Elder — blooms!*

*(The spring-door rattles softly with blowing wings; softly shuffling footsteps approach. MAID SERVANT behind CLEMENTIA, shivering, with timid glances around, hands folded.)*

*Susanna.— Ave Maria!*

*(MAID SERVANT sinks on her knees, bowing low to the ground.)*

*Susanna.— Child!*

*Maid Servant (raises her head helplessly and stares at her).— I — I don't know! (She breaks out in frightened weeping, and slides along with folded hands toward the middle pillar, to hide behind it.)*

*Susanna.— I will not be angry with you!— You — were — under — the — elder?!—*

*Maid Servant (has become quite still, and stares at SUSANNA).— I — I — know nothing.—!— He — he — will — (She hangs her head very low.)*

*Susanna (gravely).— Who—?!—*

*Maid Servant (raises her head and stares at her, then bursts out laughing heartily).— My William — holy —— (She stops, frightened, and bows her head shyly; the laughter and the words resound from the vaulting — twice — thrice — yet again — in vanishing ghostly echoes.)*

*Susanna (goes to the MAID SERVANT, lays her hand on her shoulder, raises her head, and gazes at her face).— Stand up!—*

*(MAID SERVANT stands up with folded hands.)*

*Susanna.— Dost thou love him?*

*Maid Servant (twists her fingers, shy, laughing softly, ashamed).— O — holy mother — oh ——*

*Susanna.— I — might — see — him ——*

*(CLEMENTIA raises her hand. MAID SERVANT stares a*

CLEMENTIA and shivers. *A loud knock at the door in the choir—three times—and a voice calling. All are frightened. CLEMENTIA lets her arm fall.)*

*Maid Servant (in free, passive rejoicing).—That's him.*

*(CLEMENTIA goes into the choir; a key turns heavily, a door creaks and closes with a hollow sound in the lock; a halted man's voice speaks angrily. Heavy steps endeavor in vain to tread softly.)*

*A Man Servant (young, strong, turning his cap in his hand, stands in the nave between the pillars, his eyes timidly sunk to earth, with shy defiance).—I will fetch my maid!*

*(CLEMENTIA plunges behind him out of the darkness. SUSANNA stares at him, then turns abruptly, and goes to the altar. Deep stillness, the maiden steals to the MAN SERVANT, who lays his arm in hers; with shy, shaking steps they both go out, followed by CLEMENTIA. The key turns, the door creaks, a gust of wind drives blustering between the pews, the door falls shaking in the lock, the key cries out. The candle before the crucifix goes out, flaring and shivering. SUSANNA, startled, stares into the gloom, out of which, between the pews, the white face of CLEMENTIA now floats nearer.)*

*Susanna (screams).—Satanas!—Satanas!—*

*Clementia (remains an instant paralyzed, then hastens speedily forward and stands with convulsive twisted hands in front of SUSANNA).—Susanna!!! (SUSANNA lays her hand on CLEMENTIA's shoulder and bows her head, exhausted.*

*Clementia (shocked).—Sister Susanna!!—Sister!!—you must rest. (She wishes to lead her away.)*

*Susanna (sits down on the steps of the altar).—Light the candle!—*

*Clementia.— . . .*

*Susanna.—Light the —*

*(CLEMENTIA takes a wax taper out of the niche and goes into the choir; she turns round in confused haste, her eyes looking behind.)*

*Susanna.—What is —? !—*

*Clementia (in panting fear).—I—can—not!— (She presses close to SUSANNA. SUSANNA rises and gazes into the darkness.)*

*Clementia* (*cowers on the steps*).— I do not — know — it blows — it goes. .

*Susanna*.— The nightwind —

*Clementia*.— It hums — it taps —

*Susanna*.— The organ — the blossoms — (*She takes the wax taper out of her hand.*)

*Clementia*.— Sancta Susanna.— (*She cowers down in a heap and joins her hands convulsively in front of her face.*)

(*SUSANNA goes slowly between the pews to the front, where she wholly disappears in the darkness; the perpetual red light goes out behind her figure. Out of the darkness approaches slowly a light at the same height, the light of the wax taper which SUSANNA bears before her. SUSANNA lights the candle.*)

*CLEMENTIA* (*leans her head on her hand*).— It was one night — it was one night — like this — thirty — forty years — it was — it was one night like this — (*She stands staring, looks into the void, and raises her hand in exorcism. SUSANNA approaches her, and stares at CLEMENTIA, under the exorcism.*) The nightwind sang —

*Susanna*.— The — nightwind — sang —?

*Clementia*.— The — blossoms — tapped.

*Susanna*.— The — blossoms — tapped —?

*Clementia*.— And I was young —

*Susanna*.— Young —?

*Clementia*.— Dedicated to the Lord — (*SUSANNA lets her head sink on her breast.*) Here I lay on my knees even as — thou — (*A nightingale warbles loud. CLEMENTIA cries out hoarsely.*) — Beata! — (*She veils her eyes with her arms in terror and lets her arms fall again. SUSANNA lifts her head and stares at her, with great terrified eyes. CLEMENTIA, her words hesitating, staring into the void.*) — Pale — without veil for her breast or frontlet — naked — So she came. — (*A nightingale calls far away.*) Thence — (*points with rigid arm to the right*) she mounted high on the steps — and saw me not — she ascended the altar — and saw me not — (*in hot haste*) — she pressed her naked, sinful body

against the crucified image of the Redeemer — and saw me not — she embraced Him with her white-glowing arms — and kissed His Head — and kissed — kissed — (Both nightingales rejoice near and far, loud and lastingly.) CLEMENTIA, crying out.— Beata! I called — I called, but — ! (tired) — there she fell down — she fell — (The nightingales suddenly become dumb.) We beguiled her away.— (In gray the upper part of her body half turned to the image of the Crucified, and hands stretched as if warding off something from her.)— Since then the light burns — perpetually — the light for atonement — since then the cloth girds His Loins — His Loins — there — (points in the dark behind the crucifix) — there they have — walled in — flesh and blood — in cement and stone.— (Hoarsely.)— Dost thou hear her? !— Dost thou hear? !— I have — heard her — long — always — a short time ago — (points in the gloom towards the high altar) — there — just (Claps her hands over her eyes.) — Almighty Father in Heaven! — the light has gone out!

Susanna (stares.)— I have lit it again! — (She leans her hand on the altar.)

Clementia (lets her hands sink slowly and stares at her. A spider as large as a fist creeps forth out of the darkness behind the altar. CLEMENTIA sinks terrified on her knees, pointing to the insect).— The — spider! —

Susanna (turns her head to the spider and remains standing in paralyzed trembling. The spider runs over the altar and vanishes on the other side behind the crucifix. SUSANNA turns toward CLEMENTIA after a while. Trembling and shuddering in a mechanical movement she takes her hand from the altar — her hands stretched from her body down toward the ground — stiff with terror).— Dost thou hear it —? !

Clementia (terrified).— Dost thou — hear —

Susanna.— Dost thou — hear —

Clementia.— . . .

Susanna.— The voice —

Clementia.— I — hear — nothing —

*Susanna.*— . . .

*Clementia* (makes an attempt to scream, but remains hoarse with terror).— I — hear — nothing!

*Susanna* (ghostly, repeating).— Confess — confess —— (*She stands with her back turned to the Cross.*) — He — said — what?! —

(*CLEMENTIA* in the most awful terror. *SUSANNA* makes a movement of her head to the Cross there.)

*Clementia* (folds her hands, stammering).— Ave — Maria ——

*Susanna.*— Did he say nothing? (*CLEMENTIA* shakes her head in dumb terror. *SUSANNA* extinguishes the wax taper, which has been steadily burning in her hand, and lays it on the altar; all movements performed mechanically; then she descends from the altar — step for step — silently — and remains standing close beside *CLEMENTIA*. *CLEMENTIA* bursts out laughing happily, silver-clear, — a frail many-voiced echo mingled with the dying song of the wind and the whispering of the branches.— She tears the veil from her breast, the coif, and the band; her long hair falls over her naked shoulders.) Sister *Clementia* — I am beautiful! — (*The wind drives strong, the branches rustle mightily, and the nightingales warble clearly. CLEMENTIA* sinks on her knees, with folded hands raised high.) Sister *Clementia* — I am beautiful ——

*Clementia.*— Sancta *Susanna* ——

*Susanna.*— Sister *Clementia* — I am ——

*Clementia* (rises stiff and rigid, with every word more and more firm).— Chastity — Poverty — Obedience ——

(*SUSANNA*, staring dumbly, with her hand heavy on the pew. *CLEMENTIA* passes by close to her into the darkness; the window slams violently; the rejoicing song of the nightingales, the rustle of the boughs, and the song of the wind dies suddenly. *CLEMENTIA* returns.)

*Susanna* (springs up and seizes her). The window up! — The window —— (*CLEMENTIA* raises the great cross of her rosary against her. *SUSANNA* reels back, staring at the cross, step by step, up to the altar.) — I — I see the — shining Body! I see — Him stooping down — I — feel His Arms expand ——

*Clementia (holds the cross high).— Chastity — Poverty — Obedience. — (Every word re-echoes clearly out of the vaulting, at last all three in one another re-echo and coalesce.)*

*Susanna (cries out and stares around).— Who speaks there?!*

*Clementia.— I!*

*Susanna.— I — I — I — never said that!!*

*(CLEMENTIA holds up the cross in front of her.)*

*Susanna (tears away the loin-cloth from the great crucifix with a single rent).— So help me! My Saviour against yours. — (She sinks on her knees and looks up to Him.)*

*(The spider falls down behind the arm of the cross into her hair. SUSANNA cries out with a shriek and beats with her forehead on the altar. The spider creeps over the altar and disappears behind. The bells sound shrill through the vault, among them the hollow strokes of the twelve hours. SUSANNA rouses, goes with her hands wild and tangled with her hair, and creeps on all fours down the steps of the altar in horror, fleeing from herself. With the last stroke of the hour the bells die into silence.)*

*Clementia (lets the cross sink).— Ave Maria — a new day!—*

*(SUSANNA crouches to stare around on the lowest altar step. Soft steps shuffling along and murmured prayers. The procession of nuns enters.)*

*Leaders in Prayer.— Kyrie eleison —*

*Choir.— Kyrie eleison —*

*Leaders.— Regina cœli sancta —*

*Choir.— Ora pro nobis —*

*Leaders.— Virgo virginum sancta —*

*Choir.— Ora pro nobis —*

*(The moonlight, that hitherto fell in clear streaks through the windows and cast bluish light on the pews, dies away, it becomes totally dark. The NUNS come forward to the holy water font, but stop as they catch sight of CLEMENTIA, who stands immovable in the nave between the pillars and looks at SUSANNA, who has risen and mounted to the highest step of the altar. The prayer dies away; the*

NUNS *assemble in startled silence in a wide semi-circle around SUSANNA; finally all stand still, motionless in mute awe.*

*Old Nun (steps forward a pace, silently).— Sancta — Susanna!—*

*(SUSANNA stirs, arrow-erect on the height.)*

*Old Nun (bows her head).— Sancta Susanna — !*

*Susanna.— Behind the court lie stones — (Old NUN screams. SUSANNA, firm.) You must make me the wall!—*

*(Old NUN sinks slowly, arms spread on her knees. CHOIR follows her. CLEMENTIA stands staring at SUSANNA, shuddering.)*

*Susanna (suddenly strong).— No! —*

*(Old NUN springs up. CHOIR follows her. Old NUN holds the cross of her rosary over her head. CHOIR follows her.)*

*Old Nun.— Confess!—*

*Susanna.— . . .*

*(CLEMENTIA lifts the cross.)*

*Clementia and Old Nun (severely urgent).— Confess!!!*

*Susanna.— No!!!*

*Clementia, Old Nun and Choir (shrieking).— Confess!!!*

*(The word echoes three times in the vaulting, the windows of the church rattle, the storm howls outside.)*

*Susanna.— No!!!!!! (The echo of the word grows intricate from the former echoes.)*

*Old Nun (in ecstasy).— Satana!!!*

*Old Nun and Clementia.— Satana!!!*

*Old Nun, Clementia and Choir.— Satana!!! (Shrieking, intricate echo.)*

*(SUSANNA, erect and high, in untouched grandeur. All stand still and motionless.)*

THE END

# 'WAR'

*A Play in One Act*

BY J. E. FILLMORE

## CHARACTERS

A WOMAN.

A YOUTH.

A MAN.

*Time: The Present.*

*Place: A country district in Central Europe. The edge of a forest.*

*Scene: The interior of a poor cottage of one room. In the right wall of the room is a fireplace with a low fire on the hearth. On the mantelshelf stand a candle and a crucifix. Before the fire stand a bench and a cradle. The cradle is empty save for a small blanket which is thrown over one side. In the rear right corner of the room is a cupboard; to the left of this, but not quite in the center of the rear wall, a door. Along the wall to the left of the door is a low bed and over the bed is a casement window with heavy inside shutters. A curtained bed is built partly into the right wall. Against this wall, to the right of the bed, stands a table on which is a bucket of water, and over which are shelves with dishes. A short distance out into the room from the table stands a low cobbler's bench covered with tools.*

*(The dim light of dusk enters through the casement window. Through a fine rain distant tree-tops are faintly seen. On the bench before the fire a woman sits huddled. She croons softly and*

\*'War' was produced for the first time at the Toy Theatre, Boston, December 30, 1913.

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*moves the cradle slightly with her foot. After a time she rises and slowly goes to the door which she opens. As she peers out into the gathering darkness and holds out her hand to feel the rain there is heard the sound of a very distant shot. She closes and bolts the door and fastens the shutters over the window. She takes the candle and lights it in the fire, replacing it on the shelf. Stepping back, the WOMAN bows before the crucifix as if murmuring a prayer. She notices the cradle, sits down and leans over it with a soft, joyless laugh.)*

*Woman. — Ah, baby, baby! That never knew the feel of a cradle! That only woke to fall asleep on your dead mother's breast! And I'd been waiting so long! And the cradle was all ready — the cradle was all — Hark! — (In a relieved tone.) The rain. (After a silence a faint, anxious tapping comes at the door. The WOMAN stands fearfully in the middle of the room. After a moment she takes the candle and approaches the door.) Who's there? (The tapping comes again; the WOMAN softly draws the bolt and backs away. The door is tried and opens slightly to admit a youth who quickly closes it behind him and bolts it. The young man is clad in a wet uniform, but is without hat, gun or knapsack. His left arm hangs in a torn and bloody sleeve. His boots are muddy and there are spots of mud on his uniform.) Paul! Paul!*

*Youth. — (Putting out the candle with his hand.) The light! The light! I'm followed! — Water — a drink — quick! (He stumbles toward the fire, gazes at the cradle stupidly, then seems to recollect something. He passes his hand across his forehead.) Oh, yes — but empty! — Where's Clara? (The WOMAN has secured a cup from the cupboard and has filled it with water from the pail standing on the table. She hands the YOUTH a drink without answering. He drinks greedily, looks about anxiously, lights the candle in the fire and looks about again. He notices the curtained bed.) In bed? — Mother? — (Quite sharply.) Mother! My wife! Where is she? — and the — baby? — the baby! (Slowly the WOMAN goes to the bed and draws back the curtains, showing it empty.) (Fearfully.) Mother! — Are they away — ?*

*Woman.* — Yes — away — away!

*Youth.* — Where? (*The WOMAN hesitates.*) — At her father's?

*Woman.* — (*Turns slightly from him, looks up and crosses herself.*) She is safe — in her Father's House.

*Youth.* — Since when? (*Places the candle on the mantel and sits down on the bench before the fire.*)

*Woman.* — Since the beginning of the rain.

*Youth.* — Three days! — The baby must have been very young; tell me, was it a boy?

*Woman.* — A boy.

*Youth.* — (*Smiles, stirs, then shrinks back to his first position as if in pain.*) Water, more water! (*The WOMAN refills the cup.*) — And now the roads are closed; she can't come back to-night. (*Drinks feverishly.*)

*Woman.* — Not for many nights.

*Youth.* — (*Rises painfully to his feet; touches his arm tenderly; winces.*) Only to-night matters; to-morrow I shan't — shan't — (*Staggers; his mother hastens to help him sit down.*)

*Woman.* — Here's blood! — Fresh, too!

*Youth.* — It's nothing — a flesh wound.

*Woman.* — Thank God it's not worse. Be quiet; I'll get a basin of water and wash it. (*Moves to rear and gets a basin and cloth from the cupboard, then goes to the table.*)

*Youth.* — Would to God it were worse!

*Woman.* — Paul! (*He starts as if he had heard something, looks toward the door and listens intently. The WOMAN crosses to him.*)

*Youth.* — The shot had better struck my heart.

*Woman.* — (*Puts down the basin.*) You're feverish. Here, let me help you off with your coat. (*He lets her take off his coat and sits motionless while she begins to dress his wound.*) Tell me, have you seen your father lately?

*Youth.* — No.

*Woman.* — The officers said you might be together.

*Youth.* — We were separated.

*Woman.* — (*Anxiously.*) Father was not hurt? Why aren't you together? What is father doing?

*Youth.* — He has been made an outpost.

*Woman.* — (*Relieved.*) Ah — and you — ?

(*The YOUTH turns away sullenly, as if refusing to answer, then starts suddenly and looks toward the door.*)

*Youth.* — There! — you heard. Just as I expected!

*Woman.* — (*Glances at the door.*) There, it's nothing!

*Youth.* — You heard nothing?

*Woman.* — Nothing. Nor you.

*Youth.* — Your ears are not sharpened by the pangs of coming death.

*Woman.* — Death! Your wound is slight.

*Youth.* — The enemy is at hand — Water! — God, how thirsty!

*Woman.* — (*Filling the cup at the table.*) Let them come; you can hide. I will say no one has been here.

*Youth.* — There's no hiding for me. One saw me come in. They want me. (*He bows his head in reflection.*) But there's always the other way — there's always the other way.

*Woman.* — (*Going toward him.*) Yes, prisoners are exchanged — not shot.

*Youth.* — (*Rises.*) There's something you haven't noticed.

*Woman.* — (*Backs away slowly, puts cup down on the 'cobbler's bench.*) Yes, there is something strange, but I can't — quite —

*Youth.* — (*Looking down at his uniform. Simply, hopelessly.*) You see how I am dressed.

*Woman.* — (*Taking up his coat suddenly.*) The uniform of the enemy!

*Youth.* — I — needed it.

*Woman.* — To escape from their camp. — You were a prisoner!

*Youth.* — To escape from their camp. — I was not a prisoner. (*Defiantly.*) I was — a spy!

*Woman.* — (*Recoiling.*) A spy!

*Youth.* — (*Bitterly.*) Oh, we all hate spies! But a thousand men saw sunrise to-day because of me — a spy!

*Woman.* — Your country needed you. You did right to serve.

*Youth.* — (*Looks quickly at the door, listens, then sinks to his seat. Speaks swiftly, nervously, almost as if to himself.*) This afternoon they found me out. But I had a moment's warning. I started off ahead of them — on a good horse, too — ha, yes, a good horse. I led them over the fields, over the creek, and along the edge of the forest toward our own lines. They gained on me, but they couldn't get a good shot. It began to get dark, and when I got nearly to our own territory, they slowed down, and I thought I had shaken them off. I had hardly lost sight of them when one of them jumped out of a clump of bushes off to one side. He shot my horse from under me.

*Woman.* — (*Giving him the cup.*) Here, drink.

*Youth.* — (*Drinking feverishly and handing back the cup.*) I wasn't hurt. I couldn't see the man in the bushes. There was no time to lose in random shots; I dropped my rifle and ran for the forest. The man followed, gaining at every step. He could have caught me if he had n't stopped to shoot so often. I was tired, but once in the forest I got ahead. Oh, it takes one born here to know the forest. But he followed well. I couldn't get far away. I emptied my pistol at him, but he dodged behind trees and I hardly saw him. Once, when I was near the open, I saw the horsemen following the sound of the shots. (*He listens expectantly, looking suddenly around at the door.*)

I don't know why I came this way, right into the enemy's territory — but I made a circuit of the Big Hill and found myself near our garden. I didn't intend to come in here, but — as —

(*He pauses as if interrupted.*) Has there been any fighting around here?

*Woman.* — None.

*Youth.* — No soldiers have passed lately?

*Woman.* — The patrol passes often.

*Youth.* — Two soldiers must have fought. Just outside the garden I stumbled over a fresh grave.

*Woman.* — (*Starts, recollects.*) A fresh grave! — Three days there —

*Youth.* — Three days — The day Clara left —

*Woman.* — The day Clara left. (*Half to herself.*) And you stumbled over the grave — you stumbled —

*Youth.* — (*Hurrying on as before.*) As I fell, the man emptied his pistol at me. It was getting too dark to shoot, but one bullet took me in the arm. I ran faster, off to one side. I slipped into the hidden path —

*Woman.* — The path father and you cleared to the little spring. Then you shook him off.

*Youth.* — Somehow the man followed.

*Woman.* — (*Uneasily.*) No.

*Youth.* — I was well ahead, though, but loss of blood began to weaken me. — The thirst was worse. It never let up. It made me mad. I raced off to one side again, over near the garden. I crept into the currant bushes and listened. I couldn't hear anything. I crept between two rows up toward the cottage. Still, I could hear no one. It was almost night. I saw you close the door and fasten the shutters. I wondered if it was well with Clara — if I had a son. The thirst never let up. I chewed the wet leaves. (*The WOMAN fills the cup with water again and places it on the mantelshelf, as if waiting for the YOUTH to cease speaking.*) After a time I saw the man. He had lost my trail. He went into the stable. I could just see him pass the whitewashed door. He thought I would hide there, or he went there to wait for the patrol to come and help hunt me down. He knew I was wounded and couldn't get far away!

*Woman.* — (*Taking the cup.*) Drink; the fever —

*Youth.* — (*Swiftly, nervously.*) I crept up toward the cottage; I thought I had better while I still had the strength. I

could n't call for you to open — a word would have brought a bullet. I knew it would be all up with me if he saw the light when the door opened. It was a risk — but I took it. Better die here than in the mud of the garden! — Oh, home! — home!

*Woman.* — (*Offering the cup.*) Come, drink. If the man had seen you he would have been here by this time.

*Youth.* — Just as I turned to come in I saw him once more against the whitewash. He bides his time. He knows how soon the patrol comes.

*Woman.* — It's only your imagination. Come, —

(*The son reaches for the cup. Both start suddenly. The WOMAN lets her eyes follow the YOUTH's gaze toward the door. She replaces the cup on the shelf.*)

*Youth.* — You heard that?

*Woman.* — (*Grimly.*) I heard nothing! (*It is plain that the WOMAN is fast losing her composure. Both listen intently. The WOMAN crosses the room stealthily, her eyes never leaving the door.*)

*Youth.* — (*Starting suddenly.*) At last!

*Woman.* — (*In a lower tone.*) Hush — !

*Youth.* — (*Half rising.*) A step!

*Woman.* — (*Moving about wildly.*) Hide! For the love of Heaven — hide! — In the bed! — in the cupboard! — *anywhere!*

*Youth.* — There's no hiding for *me*. (*Dumbly.*) It must be — the other way.

*Woman.* — What other way?

*Youth.* — (*Taking a small folded paper from his pocket and showing her.*) This.

*Woman.* — What's in that?

*Youth.* — Escape — freedom — sleep!

*Woman.* — What do you mean? (*Looks toward the door.*)

*Youth.* — Farewell! — (*Quickly.*) Tell Clara the road was open and I could not wait. When little Paul is a big boy, tell him his father died for his country. When father is home from the war —

*Woman.* — (*The WOMAN has approached him, then stepped back in surprise, as if unable to speak.*) Paul! — What is that?

*Youth.* — Poison. (*She snatches it from him.*) Give it back! — You don't know what you're doing! Give it back! (*He tries to take it.*)

*Woman.* — Suicide! — You would lose your soul! (*She turns as if to throw the paper into the fire. The YOUTH restrains her.*)

*Youth.* — Wait. You would rob Clara of my grave. She would bring little Paul there and tell him of his father.

*Woman.* — You would rob her of your companionship in heaven!

*Youth.* — Who knows God's will? (*The WOMAN makes again as if to throw the paper into the fire. The YOUTH stops her. Kneeling, he points into the fire. As he speaks the WOMAN slowly shrinks back from him as if fascinated.*) Yes — look into the glowing coals! See! — Sunrise! — A line of soldiers with gleaming rifles stands before a ditch. A man is led before them — blindfolded. He stands alone. They raise their rifles — ready! — fire! A bleeding corpse falls to rot in the mud! (*While the WOMAN stands dumb, as if still in her vision, he takes the cup from the mantelshelf and starts to reach out his empty hand for the powder. He winces, replaces the cup and reaches out with his freed hand.*) Come, mother, you can't refuse!

(*The WOMAN seems to be about to give him the paper, suddenly comes out of her dream, crumples the paper violently in her hand.*)

*Woman.* — Your soul must be saved alive! (*There is a short distinct tapping at the door.*) Quick! — Help drag this bed across the door! (*The YOUTH refuses, sitting before the fire with his hand half over his face. He looks stolidly into the coals. The WOMAN drags the low bed across the door. She calls out.*) I am an old woman and alone; pass by! There is no one here! (*She approaches the fireplace. There is a silence.*) Oh, why does no one answer? (*Her glance takes in the cup on the mantel, then she looks suddenly at the paper in her hand. The door is tried from without. She looks at her son in agony, takes the cup with mingled*

*loathing and cunning and slowly crosses the room, setting the cup on the cobbler's bench. She looks around at the door. There is a tapping.) Sunrise!—(Whispers.) Sunrise! (Feverishly she unfolds the paper and lets its contents slip into the cup of water. She crosses to her son, offering the cup.) Don't be angry with me, Paul. Come, the fever is on you again. Drink! (The youth grudgingly takes the cup, and without drinking places it on the bench beside him.)*

*Youth. — The thirst has left.*

*Woman. — God said that! (After a moment there is another tap at the door. She hesitates, wrings her hands and takes the cup again.) Ah, he's angry with his old mother — his old mother that loves his soul better than her own.*

*(The YOUTH rouses himself a little impatiently, takes the cup, drinks, then resumes his former position. The WOMAN backs across the room, watching him, wide eyed, After a time he passes his hand slowly over his forehead. He rises with an effort. The WOMAN hastens to steady him.)*

*Youth. — (Wearily.) I didn't know I was so hot; I must get away from the fire — it makes me sleepy — (He looks about drowsily.) I seem to forget — where — (The WOMAN leads him to the low bed and helps him to lie down, lifting his legs to the bed and straightening them out.) — sleepy — sleepy. (The WOMAN stands mutely at the foot of the bed. After a moment the YOUTH opens his eyes, looks dreamily about, then seems to see something at the side of the bed. He exclaims in mild surprise.) Clara! — and the baby! — But the roads — are — closed —*

*Woman. — (Softly.) The road is always open — the road is always — (She breaks off and goes to the head of the bed and kisses the YOUTH's lips. There is a tapping at the door. She starts, then rises and quite calmly pulls the head of the bed away from the door, then drags the bed somewhat out into the room. From the curtained bed she takes a stiffly folded sheet which she unfolds and spreads over the form of the YOUTH. Quietly, she goes to the door and slips the bolt, then stands between the door and the bed stolidly waiting.*



*The door is flung open and a man darts into the room, closing the door quickly after him. He is of middle age, uniformed, but very differently so than the YOUTH. The WOMAN starts back.)*  
Father! — Father!

*Man.* — (*Quickly.*) I was chasing one of the enemy. He came this way.

*Woman.* — If you had called! —

*Man.* — A word might have brought a bullet. He got away, but he is near. I wounded him, but —

*Woman.* — You wounded —

*Man.* — I couldn't go back without coming in —

*Woman.* — (*Dully.*) It was you!

*Man.* — I — ? You have heard the fellow! Did he try to get in? (*The WOMAN staggers weakly back from the man who now sees the sheet-covered form.*) God! — Is that — ? Is he — ? (*The WOMAN nods; she starts to cross herself, but suddenly she looks at her hand and holds it away from her with horror. The man speaks without triumph.*) So — I killed him.

*Woman.* — (*Struggles to speak.*) — The wound — was nothing —

*Man.* — But he died.

*Woman.* — Poison — I — (*indicating herself.*)

*Man.* — (*Suspiciously.*) Poison — some trick! (*He makes as if to look under the sheet, but the WOMAN forces him back.*)

*Woman.* — No — no! (*Half to herself.*) He thought he would be taken — shot.

*Man.* — You saw him take it?

*Woman.* — (*Nods weakly.*) He said you saw him come in. — There was the tapping at the door — the tapping! He said he would be shot — at sunrise — (*half whispers.*) Sunrise! — thrown into the ditch — into the mud — He wanted to be buried where his wife —

*Man.* — (*Breaking in.*) But prisoners are not shot —

*Woman.* — He was — a spy.

*Man.* — A spy! (*Again tries to look and is again prevented.*)  
So he took poison.

*Woman.* — He — had poison — I took it away; but he begged — begged —

*Man.* — You gave it back?

*Woman.* — There was the tapping — the tapping — I gave it to him in some water — and he never knew — never knew —

*Man.* — You poisoned him!

*Woman.* — I couldn't let him lose his soul — I couldn't! — I wanted him to be with his wife — his baby —

*Man.* — But we might have got information from him — he might have been forced to tell something. He was a spy — an enemy!

*Woman.* — He — wore the enemy's uniform — but — but —

*Man.* — But what? (*Suddenly suspicious.*)

*Woman.* — He was one of us.

*Man.* — A comrade — My God! — If you had waited! (*He attempts to look again. The WOMAN prevents him.*)

*Woman.* — He was sure it was the enemy — sure —

*Man.* — A countryman! —

*Woman.* — (*To herself.*) There was the tapping — the tapping —

*Man.* — Such a young fellow, too. — I could see that — almost the size of our Paul — (*Slowly he stretches out his hand as if to turn down the sheet. The WOMAN restrains him, speaking half in command, half in appeal.*)

*Woman.* — Say I — did — right — say — I —

*Man.* — (*After a pause; gravely.*) You did do right, WOMAN, — God help you. (*The WOMAN turns away to the rear wall, her face covered. The MAN speaks tenderly as he draws down the sheet.*) — And he was one of our own! — (*Looks.*) My son! — My son! (*After a time he looks at the WOMAN, who, feeling his glance, finally brings herself to look into his eyes. He exclaims in a voice full of bitter understanding, but without reproach.*) — You!

CURTAIN.

## JAROSLAV VRCHLICKY AND HIS PLACE IN BOHEMIAN DRAMA\*

'Concessions! All the time concessions! Our entire life consists of bartering concessions. We concede away our ideals, our warm youthful dreams. We concede the precious jewels so that we could keep the empty treasure box.

'And what is the ultimate gain? Our hearts grow weary, our souls commonplace. Were it not for books and work, how could we ever live thru it all. . . . '—*Vrchlicky*.

BY CHARLES RECHT

**A**S the modern Bohemian literature dates from the epoch of European revolutions of '48, the prolific pen of Jaroslav Vrchlicky was due somewhat to the literary demand of a newly awakened nation. His predecessors in the drama had paved the way for him at a sacrifice of personal freedom to them, and the cost of starvation. When the Slav will prevail in the world, and the story of the Czechs will be recounted by foreign students of letters, the daring and enthusiasm of the young dramatist, Joseph Kaietan Tyl, will earn the tribute which properly belongs to him. Ordered to disband his troupe of actors, driven out of Prague, forbidden by the authorities to perform plays in the Bohemian tongue anywhere in Bohemia, this actor-playwright wrote his playlets in garrets and fields, and performed them in villages by candlelight, with marionettes before the newly-freed Serfs. Marionettes would hardly be suitable for a production of Strindberg before a modern audience, yet to a mind with an imagination which is not overtaxed, the dolls represent all emotions of character. The marionette has of late lost its place on the English-speaking stage, as though its use prevented a purely artistic production. This is an error. In

\*See in the Autumn, 1913, number of POET LORE, the Introduction to Vrchlicky's 'At the Chasm.'

plays for children, for instance, the use of the marionette will prove a great educational factor, as it rouses the imagination of the child and weaves about the helpless tottering idol a purer and better fiction than does a realistic production by clever self-conscious children.

In the newly-awakened Bohemia, the marionettes became very popular, and the simple crude Kopecky earned his way to fame by writing hundreds and hundreds of 'scenarios' for marionettes. He paraphrased 'Hamlet,' 'Faust,' 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and others, sowing the seed in a nation of peasants for a desire for dramatic self-expression. What Kopecky did in the villages, Vrchlicky found himself called upon to do in Prague. But his treatment of the classical themes was not the journalistic effort of the penny-a-liner; it was a master's hand retouching ancient fables. A thorough knowledge of the prevalent conditions in the place of action seems to pervade the entire play, be the scene in fabulous dark Slavdom, glorious Hellas or debauched Rome. True, that the style and construction is still pre-Ibsenite. Asides and monologues mar the effect and heroic exits seem bombastic to our modern ear. But the plot, the wit, the poetry is there. And the variety of subjects almost awes us. Taking a few titles at random:

'Pietro Aretino' (1892), comedy in four acts. Venice in 1347.

'Three Kisses' (1893), a dramatic poem in one act. Bohemian mythology.

'Samson,' a trilogy, a dramatic poem consisting of: I. Samson and the Philistines; II. Samson in the desert; III. Samson and Delilah.

The 'Barrel of Diogenes' (1902), comedy in one act, Corinth, 329 B. C.

'Ear of Diogenes' (1900), comedy in three acts; Syracuse, 384 B. C.

'New Life' (1900), comedy in one act. Modern Bohemian aristocracy.

'Wisdom of Rabbi Ben Loew,' comedy in four acts. Prague during the reign of Rudolph II.

Let us look into the texture of this many colored tapestry. Let us examine the workmanship in particular of one of his Roman plays, and follow it with a translation of a practical stage piece — a popular one-act Bohemian play of situation.

### THE VENGEANCE OF CATULLUS

*Festa, Emef*

Written in 1887. Action takes place in Rome, in the year 60 B. C.

PERSISTRATES, a Syrian slave dealer arrived in Rome with ACME, a beautiful Greek slave. While he was taking her through the forum in order to deliver her to her new master, CONSUL QUINTUS CECILIUS METELLUS, the Syrian stopped to hear the exhortation of a demagogue. ACME took advantage of the preoccupied mind of the rustic and slipped away from him. He raised a hue and cry, a mob gathered and they pursued the beautiful slave. She ran into the house of the poet, GAIUS VALERIUS CATULLUS. The slaves of CATULLUS woke up and prevented PERSISTRATES from entering. The combat brought the poet to the door, and he, finding the girl exceedingly pretty, and upon ascertaining the name of her new master, offers her his protection. He orders his slaves to eject PERSISTRATES, who swears that METELLUS shall avenge the wrong.

*Persistrates.*—The mighty Metellus will avenge me. He paid well for this slave, and she is his. I'll go, but you will pay dearly for this, you obstinate Roman — and that miserable slave also.

*Catullus.*—Not another offending word against her — she is my guest. (*To his slaves.*) Get me rid of him, and if he does not go, throw him out into the street.

*Persistrates (partly on the threshold and partly behind scene).*—This is a den of robbers — but I'll teach you — slave thief! I know well why you will not give her up — you leach, you want a beautiful slave for nothing, beggarly Romans — you are all

cheats — all of you. Senator a rogue, Quaestor a rogue, Consul a rogue, Pontifex Maximus a rogue — all rogues — all of you. (*The slaves drive him out.*)

(*GAIUS hides the girl in an adjoining chamber. METELLUS promptly arrives.*)

*Metellus.*— Good cheer to you, Gaius Valerius. Pray forgiveness of the muses for me, because I tear you so rudely from their sweet embrace.

*Catullus.*— How do you fare, O Consul? Alas, both the muses and my friends have forgotten me.

*Metellus.*— Your blame probably in both cases.

*Catullus.*— Hardly — consul — but permit me to offer you a seat in my house. (*Points to a seat.*)

*Metellus (seating himself).*— You are forgetting all your friends. How long is it since you were with us? Did some one offend you? Perhaps Cicero is in your way? Did his wit hurt you?

*Catullus.*— Cicero's wit cannot offend me — he is so much older and he saved the country.

*Metellus.*— He did not save it alone — others had a goodly share in it, though they do not brag about it. Was it young Cæsar, perhaps? He is so free with his tongue — but, then, you know when we drink we loosen up a bit. Ha! Gaius?

*Catullus.*— Neither did Cæsar offend me. They whose minds are equal to mine, I respect, and the others I regard not.

*Metellus.*— Well, was it Gellius?

*Catullus (to himself).*— That scoundrel. (*Loudly.*) Let us forget it, consul. We cannot change the world.

*Metellus.*— Then it could have only been Clodia. I always tell her to be careful of her sayings, lest she offend the best of my friends. How unfortunate! How stupid!

*Catullus.*— Be not vexed, consul. How long I have absented myself from your house, I know not — but I know that the old order still prevails there. Sometimes a blossom falls away from the bough, but the tree blooms as ever — somewhere in the forest, a bird grows silent forever, but the forest resounds

as of yore with thousand-throated song. Why should the hackneyed life change its course for my sake? Not even we poets are indispensable to this world.

*Metellus.*—Truly spoken, Gaius Valerius. You were always clever. Well, in the house things remain unchanged. Cicero talks political gossip between his nods over the wine cups; Cæsar teases and plays with my wife's slaves, and Gellius —

*Catullus.*—I care nothing about Gellius. Tell me about your wife, about Clodia.

*Metellus.*—My wife entertains Gellius. (*Observing that CATULLUS is displeased.*) Why are you displeased? The evenings are so tedious — if you would come, she would entertain you, Gaius; it is all the same to her, dear friend.

*Catullus.*—And to you also, apparently. This would be very funny indeed if it were not so sad.

*Metellus.*—What do you fear, Gaius Valerius?

*Catullus (to himself).*—Shall I open the eyes of this bloated fool? But to what end — I'll rather get rid of him. But how? (*Loudly.*) Let that pass, consul. Your visit has moved me deeply, it brought to my mind the memories of my former visits at your house. Days of our old friendship and jollity, that true Roman jollity. Let us be merry and forget. Wine! Ho, there, Furinus, some wine. (*FURINUS enters.*) That old wine, which Hortensius praised, saying it contains all the laughter of Bacchus.

(*FURINUS brings in an amphora of wine and two vessels, and serves.*)

*Metellus.*—I never offend Bacchus by refusing his pure divine gift.

*Catullus.*—Well said, my friend, — pure wine! Wine is never mixed except by fools and duped husbands. Let's drink to their health. (*Raises the vessel.*)

*Metellus.*—There is meaning in your words. I'll gladly respond, for I am neither one nor the other. (*Raising the vessel.*) So to their health, Gaius. (*Laughing.*) But why should just these two sorts mix their wine?

*Catullus.*— Fools mix their wine, Consul Metellus, because they are fools.

*Metellus.*— And duped husbands?

*Catullus.*— Love is like wine.

*Metellus.*— Excellent comparison!

*Catullus.*— So that duped husbands drink only mixed wine.

*Metellus.*— There you are! I never thought of that — well, well — these poets — rascals! Well, as long as I drink unmixed wine. Long live poetry. Gaius Valerius. (*Raising vessel.*)

*Catullus.*— And friendship!

*Metellus.*— And love! But unmixed, ha! ha! (*He laughs.*)

*Catullus.*— Yes, unmixed. (*They drink.*) And what are you citizens doing in the Senate, consul?

*Metellus.*— The Senate? I am the Senate.

*Catullus.*— What's doing in politics? The provinces.

*Metellus.*— I am the provinces.

*Catullus.*— Pardon my short-sightedness, consul, I should have asked what are you doing?

*Metellus.*— I am opposing the agrarian laws. That fool Flavius thinks that the Senate does not know that Pompeius is back of his laws. We are more clever than he thinks.

*Catullus.*— Yes, it is either Pompeius or Cæsar, there is no room for a third man in Rome.

*Metellus.*— What's that? It is either Metellus or Pompeius, you ought to say. (*Drinks.*)

*Catullus.*— Oh, yes, Metellus. (*To himself.*) It's all fiddlesticks to me.

*Metellus.*— Cæsar? Begone! Who'd think of that stripling after that scandal.

*Catullus.*— Scandal? I know nothing about it. I pray you, tell me. (*He pours out more wine for him.*)

*Metellus (drinking).*— You don't tell me that it is news to you? Are you living in the Cycladæ Islands or in Rome? There certainly was a scandal and a great one, too.

*Catullus.*— No — tell me.



*Metellus.*— I always predict that women will be the ruin of young Cæsar. They will be his misfortune. He is losing his hair rapidly, and as for a beard, he will never be able to grow one. Ha, ha, fancy it! Cæsar is a prætor, you know that.

*Catullus.*— Yes, and ——

*Metellus.*— And a prætor must hold at his house ‘the feast to the Goddess of Chastity.’ It takes place at night, and no man must be present. Now, you know that the brother of my wife is crazily in love with Pompeia, the wife of Cæsar.

*Catullus.*— I know that.

*Metellus.*— Pompeia was the priestess at this feast — ha — ha — and Clodius, dressed in woman’s garb, went there — ha — as a harp player — ha!

*Catullus.*— The rascal. And they found him out?

*Metellus.*— Of course. You know Aurelia, Cæsar’s mother. She has sharper eyes than Argus. She screamed and howled, and the next day all Rome was full of the scandal. One of the tribunes of the plebs had to sue Clodius for blasphemy of the gods.

*Catullus.*— A pretty little tale — but why Cæsar? What had he to do with this?

*Metellus.*— Did it not happen in Cæsar’s house? Was not Clodius there after Cæsar’s wife? And then Clodius said that Cæsar egged him on. *He* wanted to find out what the women folk did at the ‘Feast of Chastity.’

*Catullus.*— But did not Cæsar testify in favor of Clodius? Did he not defend the honor of his House and prove the alibi of Clodius?

*Metellus.*— Cæsar did — yes — but not Cicero.

*Catullus.*— But what cares Cicero for the wife of Cæsar and the pranks of Clodius.

*Metellus.*— Oh! simple poet! (*Laughs.*) Back of all was Terentia, the wife of Cicero.

*Catullus.*— What has she to do with it?

*Metellus.*— Baby! (*Drinks.*) You know that the evil tongues said that Cicero is after the sister of Clodius, my wife, Clodia.

*Catullus (to himself).*— And they did not lie either.

*Metellus.*— And that angered old jealous Terentia, the wife of Cicero — so now Cicero had to testify against his old friend Clodius — understand?

*Catullus.*— Not fully.

*Metellus.*— When you marry — you will. These women are awful! Fancy it! The other day, Gellius said that every husband — every one, he said, is duped and deceived by his wife — what say you about it?

*Catullus (with an ironical smile).*— Nothing at all, consul.

*Metellus.*— Not I, of course, that's self-understood. I told him, and they all agreed with me, that *I* am not. No, sir! I drink my wine unmixed — ha — ha. That was excellent wit, that was, Gaius Valerius. (*He laughs and drinks; wants to rise, but overcome by wine, sinks back into the seat.*) I must tell this comparison at home — they'll have a good laugh about it. But here I talk and talk and forget the purpose of my call.

*Catullus.*— I am anxious to hear it.

*Metellus.*— This morning I bought a little present for Clodia, a young slave from the Syrian dealer, Persistrates. I wanted to surprise her.

*Catullus (to himself).*— And enjoy yourself.

*Metellus.*— We told him to bring her to the house of Cæsar, and we would all look her over.

*Catullus (to himself).*— Poor girl! (*Loudly.*) Yes, and ——

*Metellus.*— And we waited over at Cæsar's, and waited, and drank and drank ——

*Catullus (to himself).*— So much the better.

*Metellus (he is speaking more and more sleepily and slowly).*— And the slave dealer does not come — no — no — hour after hour — no slave dealer — then he comes alone — face like a red beet — the fool! She escaped him ——

*Catullus.*— What can I do about it?

*Metellus.*— He blurted out that she ran into your house, Gaius Valerius — here into your house. Gellius wanted to call

an ædile with lictors for the slave — but I said — Gaius Valerius Catullus — he is a friend of mine — a good friend of mine — you understand, said I — no scandal among friends — I'll go there and we'll settle it like good friends. Gellius said Catullus wants to anger Clodia, so he takes in pretty slaves as substitutes, but I made believe I did not hear it — I never hear it when any one insults any of my friends — my friends — and you are a good friend of mine — you and Cæsar and Hortensius and Gellius and Cicero.

*Catullus.*— Nice company, thanks. (*To himself.*) Not asleep yet!

*Metellus.*— And I want good-will everywhere among friends — ha — ha — everything quiet, peaceful, ha — ha — understand. (*He falls asleep.*)

(*When the corpulent CONSUL has fallen asleep, CATULLUS summons FURINUS and they move him into a curtained niche and hide him. CATULLUS recalls ACME, who overheard part of the preceding dialogue. A love scene ensues. ACME does not know who CATULLUS is and recites some of his own poetry, which she memorized. ACME admits that she is betrothed to SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS, a friend of CATULLUS. Just then FURINUS enters hastily and announces the arrival of Clodia. ACME resumes her former place of hiding. CLODIA (surnamed also LESBIA) enters and demands the slave. CATULLUS refuses. CLODIA names CATULLUS, so that the listening ACME learns for the first time that he is the very poet whose verses she had been reciting. CLODIA complains bitterly of the infidelity to her of CATULLUS. He answers by reminding her of her numerous lovers. He names Gellius, Gellius Peplecola, his uncle, Cælius, Rufus, Sestus Clodius.*)

*Clodia.*— Accuse me — Oh, pure swan of Verna! Who is Aufidia, Ipsitilla?

*Catullus.*— They succeeded you, O Clodia! My poisoned heart sought peace and oblivion. It discarded the shattered chalice in which it found but ugliness and sin. Love? Neither you nor I knew love, Lesbia, and now it is too late.

*Clodia.*—To-day, you are a sober and a bitter sophist, poet Catullus. Love means a different thing to you than in former years. You have forgotten the happy days when you and I secretly met in the house of Manlius. Forgotten your kisses and your verses to me when we sat among the tangled blossoms of Egyptian poppies. Then you lived, Gaius, because you were a poet still, and you loved. To-day your lyre is mute — but I still love you fervently, passionately.

(CATULLUS reminds her of her liaison with GELLIUS. She replies that she uses GELLIUS to forget her sorrow, her love for CATULLUS. She demands and implores, wants to kill the Greek slave. He reminds her of her husband and her immorality. She admits she is but the victim of circumstances. When very young, she married METELLUS, and he left her for a campaign through the morasses of Gaul. She is insistent. He moves away from her — she follows —)

*Catullus.*—What do you want? All is at an end between us.

*Clodia (after him).*—Nay — nay. The poem of our love is but beginning now.

*Catullus.*—Unfortunate, what are you doing? (*Moves nearer to the curtained niche.*)

*Clodia.*—A great poet — you may be, but a heartless man you are. (*She follows and he stops, at the curtain. She implores him and kneels down. She raises her hands to him.*) Forgive me — love me!

*Catullus (who is standing closely to the curtain, steps aside quickly and pulls the rope, the curtain opens rapidly and CLODIA kneels at the feet of METELLUS. The consul's hands embrace his rotund abdomen, and he is snoring loudly).*—Here is your place Clodia.

*Clodia (crushed).*—This is treason!

*Catullus (laughing loudly).*—Ho, Consul Metellus, rise! You never experienced such a scene as this. Behold!

*Clodia (to CATULLUS).*—You wretch!

*Metellus (awaking, just as CLODIA is rising from the ground.*

*He rubs his eyes*).— My sweet little dove — see, Gaius Valerius! Here, indeed, is a wife for you.

*Catullus (with irony)*.— She longed for you, consul. She was jealous of you. I did not know how to convince her that, overcome with the burden of the cares of state, you succumbed to sleep here. She demanded to see you, so I had to satisfy her—that perfect wife of yours.

*Clodia (in a rage)*.— I shall remember this.

*Metellus (rising. To CATULLUS)*.—And the gossips were saying that you and she — Ha! Ha! I drink my wine unmixed, do I not, Gaius Valerius?

*(ACME is called then, and accompanied by FURINUS is escorted to the house of her betrothed, SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS. PERSISTRATES appears and explains that it was all a mistake, that the real Greek slave girl had been found by him and was already at the house of METELLUS.)*

*Metellus*.— Well, at any rate, I had an excellent nap here — suppose we go home — dearest Clodia.

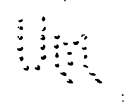
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The indispensable hackneyed screen of French comedy is here, to be sure, but there is subtlety in the treatment which discloses a skilled hand. And there's an atmosphere in this bit of an act which relieves our conception of the heavy *deus ex machina* Cæsar and his times by the sketch of the young Cæsar, who is rapidly getting baldheaded, who flirts with Clodia's slaves and sends her brother to spy on his own wife. And thundering Cicero falls asleep between cups of wine and political small talk. The self-same familiar touch prevails in his treatment of all-heroes, be it Samson, Bar Kochba or Titiano Vecelli.

To-day, modern Bohemian literature is in a transitional period. The great poet Svatopluk Cech is dead — Vrchlicky is gone, and while there are minor dramatists and poets, whose work is perhaps about equal to that of Pinero or Henley, there are none whose fame would spread far beyond the limits of the crown lands of Saint Venceslas.

In the field of humor and satire, however, Bohemia was exceptionally favored in the birth of Ignat Herrman. Unfortunately his writings are so local, the types drawn so purely bourgeois Bohemian, that the non-Slavonic world must forever be denied the pleasure of the exquisite wit and humor unparalleled by any one else in the Bohemian world of letters. His is a treatment of a sympathetic onlooker, and while each type is provokingly ludicrous, the peculiarities and helplessness awakens our sympathy and love. His 'Little Shop that was Eaten Up' (three volumes) is a masterpiece. Almost a photographic portrayal of the life and death of a small shopkeeper, it contains unsurpassed humor and pathos. While his 'Prague Sketches,' his 'Little Folks of Ours' (childhood experiences superior to 'Tom Sawyer'), 'Small Animals I Have Tried to Keep,' and many others, would not offend our Anglo-Saxon prudery, there are others where plain speaking is not avoided, and he completes such details of his picture willfully, knowing that he is writing for a nation whose mind is pure and which demands truthfulness from its teachers and bards.

All such writers of Bohemia, however, owe a debt to Vrchlicky which they cannot over-estimate. Mainly a poet, he inspired other poets. As a dramatist he lifted the drama from the marionette stage. As a translator he made it possible for younger men to study from a good translation the works of Shakespeare, Byron, Ibsen, de Musset and many others. As a patriot he taught the younger men to look for art among men and women of the Boehmerwald, Erz and Riesengebirge. His works have as well a practical stage value. The following one-act piece could be mistaken for a play coming from the Guignol, the Stadtheater or the Princess. I have taken some liberty with the original manuscript and left out a sentence here and there to bring it a little closer to our understanding of a one-act play. The ending of the play was also changed. Modesty, not my intention, forbids my stating that I touched it but to adorn. I trust, however, that the intrusion of the minor mind will cohesively blend



into the frame work of the entire picture and not mar its effect.

### THE WITNESS\*

*Finda, 1914*

#### *Dramatis Personae*

IUSTUS KORBER, J. D. (*fifty-five years of age*), a lawyer.†

THERESA, his wife (*thirty-three years of age*).

GUSTAV CERNICK, J. D. (*thirty-five years of age*), a lawyer, KORBER'S associate.

JOSEPH VALENTA (*about sixty years of age*).

MARY, a servant.

A PLAINCLOTHES POLICEMAN.

*The dining-room in KORBER'S apartment. The servant is clearing the table at which KORBER, buried in a newspaper, is sitting. THERESA is taking things down from a buffet. The appearance of the room indicates that the family is about to remove. Most of the pictures are on the floor and are set back against the walls. Near the hearth is a barrel, and a trunk on the left; near the window is a lady's writing table. Atop of it are hat boxes, toilet articles and similar trifles. As the curtain rises, the servant, having placed the dishes on a tray, is taking them out into the kitchen on the right.*

*Theresa.* — You'll have to excuse that poor lunch, dear — the moving upsets everything.

*Iustus.* — Oh! don't mention it.

*Theresa.* — And are you not vexed?

*Iustus.* — Not about the luncheon; there are plenty of other things.

*Theresa (going over to him).* — Poor boy, you are worried.

*Iustus.* — Some things just do not succeed, and in others people take advantage of you.

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†In Austria all lawyers have J. U. D. degrees, and are called doctors.

*Theresa.*— But you ought not to worry any more. There's no need of it now.

*Iustus.*— Easily said. Well, it will not kill me. (*Pause.*) Will you be through to-day with this (*surveying the disarranged articles*) veritable babel?

*Theresa.*— I hope so. Does it not give you a queer feeling to move after all these fifteen years? It is a big part of our life from which we are forcing ourselves.

*Iustus.*— But you insisted yourself on this moving.

*Theresa.*— Of course, I did. We did not have enough space here. (*Going toward the window.*) Across the yard is the insane asylum with its high walls and a row of tiresome windows.

*Iustus.*— And it annoys you only now, after these fifteen years. Women! Women!

*Theresa (smiling).*— There you go, against women again.

*Iustus.*— Do I wrong you then? I was fully contented here for twelve — fifteen years, and you for the last twelve never uttered a word against the neighborhood. All at once — 'it's gloomy here.' All of a sudden, the 'high walls' and 'tiresome windows.' You know well that I do anything to please you, and so I moved. Had you wanted to remain here, we would have never moved away.

*Theresa (seriously).*— Thanks, very much, for catering to my whims.

*Iustus.*— You are entirely welcome. (*He reads. Pause.* *IUSTUS continues to read the newspaper. THERESA is removing dishes from the buffet into the basket.*) Well, all in all, are you glad to move away from here?

*Theresa.*— Yes, I am longing for a change.

*Iustus.*— You know that we can still remain here if you wish it. The flat is not rented. I can stop over at the landlord's and tell him. All you have to do is to hang up your pictures, and things will go on as in the past.

*Theresa (quickly).*— Oh, no! no! What would the people



say about us? Everybody knows now that we are moving, and besides, you'd forfeit a month's rental in the new house.

*Iustus.*— How practical you are.

*Theresa.*— We'll be through with everything before evening. Only let's get away from here.

*Iustus.*— For my part! (*He puts away the newspaper, rises and goes into the adjoining room. THERESA continues her work. Presently IUSTUS returns with hat and overcoat and goes over to the hearth and lights a cigar.*) There's another thing!

*Theresa.*— Yes, dear?

*Iustus (taking a paper out of his pocket).*— I found this on my desk this morning. D. Cernik sends me his immediate resignation.

*Theresa (surprised).*— Resignation?

*Iustus.*— Yes — stupid fellow — his style and all, is insulting.

*Theresa (suppressing her nervousness).*— That's why you lost your appetite this noon.

*Iustus.*— Bah! Nonsense. But to leave me after ten years suddenly — without the slightest cause. And he has not enough decency to come straight to me and tell me like a man. He writes it and puts it on my desk and goes.

*Theresa.*— He probably will want to open his own office now.


*Iustus.*— Then I could understand his motive, but he does not.

*Theresa.*— Where is he going?

*Iustus.*— He says he is going to America.

*Theresa (stops in her work and repeats very slowly).*— To America.

*Iustus.*— Evidently, he is insane. But whatever he does is immaterial to me. It's only that I was so dependent upon him. He was so reliable and, as a rule, he did not talk much. I can't bear a prattling fool. In that way Gustav was perfect — even if he was not a good worker, he did not talk. God knows whom I'll get. Some fellow who'll talk politics, literature, drama and what not, from morning till night.



*Theresa.*— Well, young men must take an interest in life.

*Iustus.*— They should be like me. My life is in my law books and cases. The other things are superfluous.

*Theresa.*— Unfortunately so for you.

*Iustus.*— Fortunately, you ought to say. If you'd follow my ways, you would not be so nervous. But people who have no cares of their own, make everything their business. And so they get themselves into no end of trouble. Now I have made my little speech and I can go.

*Theresa.*— When are you coming back?

*Iustus.*— I don't know. Hardly to this place. We'll see each other in the new flat.

*Theresa.*— And you say that so indifferently.

*Iustus*(*in the doorway*).— Should I cry about it? Some people move every half a year. If they were like you, they'd have no tears left for the regulation family funeral. Good-bye.

*Theresa.*— Good-bye, dear. (*THERESA remains alone for some time, continuing her work.*) To America — to America. He, the only witness — (*going to the window*) except these high mute walls. (*She shivers nervously.*) Away from these witnesses — to America.

(*GUSTAV CERNIK enters. He is dressed for travel.*)

*Gustav.*— Good evening.

*Theresa* (*surprised*).— You? (*Collecting herself.*) Yes — Good evening.

*Gustav.*— I see that I should not have come here at all. Forgive me, and farewell!

*Theresa.*— Good luck to you, Cernik.

*Gustav* (*looking around*).— So you are really going away.

*Theresa.*— It is best to end all at once.

*Gustav.*— Just as I am doing.

*Theresa.*— Yes, Korber told me that you are going to America.

*Gustav.*— The only solution to our problem, Theresa.

*Theresa.*— Pardon me — our problem —

Gustav.— Yes, dear Mrs. Korber — our problem.

(*The scene which ensues is that of a parting between two old lovers. She tells him that the walls of the room of the opposite house seem to reproach her for her infidelity. He says that he has noticed her indifference to him. He returns little love notes which they exchanged, when he worked in the law library next to her sewing-room. He wants to begin a new life also, and returns these to her so that all the witnesses may be destroyed. She places them on the mantel. He goes over to her and embraces her passionately. He kisses her once more, and covering her face with her hands, she rushes into an adjoining room. He leaves. There is a long pause. Enters JOSEPH VALENTA, a tall, grayish man, poorly dressed. He holds his cap in his hand.*)

(VALENTA takes a few steps into the empty room, looks around, goes back again to the door, coughs.)

Theresa (*entering from adjoining room*).— Who's here?

Valenta.— Pardon, *Gnädige Frau*, pardon my liberty.

Theresa.— Who let you in?

Valenta.— I did not have to ring at all, *Gnädige Frau*.\* The door was open, there was no one in the vestibule, so I walked in here.

Theresa.— And what do you want?

Valenta.— I wanted to ask you to kindly, to — I met Dr. Korber in the street about half an hour ago, when he left the house, and I begged him — I asked for some kind of employment even if it were ever so small. The doctor, he was so kind, he said I should come over here, that he will come back here and we'll talk about it. Some minor clerical work or errands. I would do anything; you'd be satisfied — I am an old man, but I am well preserved, and when the doctor gave me hopes he said he would see — excuse me, *Gnädige Frau*. I was so bold as to——

\* I have used the title of "*Gnädige Frau*" and not "*milostpam*," its Bohemian equivalent. My reason for it is twofold: in the first place, it is a strictly German custom imported into Kleinstädtliches Bohemia; and secondarily, because the American readers will more readily understand the meaning of that custom if it is in German. Personally, I should have preferred to use the Bohemian "*milostpam*" in colloquial usage. This flattering title is pronounced "*gnä'ge*," and it is used in this form by Valenta.

*Theresa.*— But my husband will hardly return to-day. And you can see that we are moving. There's no time for it to-day.

*Valenta.*— That's just why I took the liberty to-day, *Gnädige Frau*, as long as we are, as it were, still neighbors. —

*Theresa.*— Neighbors?

*Valenta.*— Certainly (*pointing to the windows*), *Gnädige Frau* does not know me, but I know her very well.

*Theresa* (*not noticing his motion*).— No, I do not know you.

*Valenta.*— And I know the doctor, very well, too, and also that young gentleman who always sits over the law books — there. When a man sees the same faces every day for fifteen years, he knows them like his own family.

*Theresa* (*disturbed*).— You watched our faces daily for fifteen years. That's terrible! But from where?

*Valenta* (*goes to the window and points*).— From there, *Gnädige Frau*.

*Theresa* (*frightened*).— That's the madhouse — man — did you escape from there?

*Valenta* (*smiling*).— I am not a lunatic. I was the caretaker of the inmates there, *Gnädige*. But I was unfortunate. Every man has his enemies, and I am the victim of mine. We had a new superintendent and he believed the report that I drugged and mistreated the patients there. So, yesterday, he discharged me. After fifteen years, *Gnädige*, it is hard, and so in my distress, I wondered if the doctor and you could not assist me with employment of some sort. A person who lives across the way for fifteen years and notices everything that goes on in the opposite apartment, and sees day after day who comes in and who goes out, he feels that they are sort of old acquaintances, *Gnädige Frau*, begging your pardon.

*Theresa.*— You have spied on us for fifteen years. And you use that as an inducement for me to employ you! That is a strange recommendation.

*Valenta.*— Good Lord, *Gnädige*, you cannot blame me. When I had to sit there (*pointing at the windows*) with nothing

at all to do. My work was over early. All the windows are on this side, so this was the only interesting place I could look on, as you never did lower your windowshades.

*Theresa (disturbed).*— Who could fancy that — you insolent, low fellow —

*Valenta (smiling).*— Really, *Gnädige*, do not excite yourself — I will not mention a word to a living person — I am a very discreet man, you know — but — our sort gets into all kinds of places and learns of all kinds of secrets — because them fellows across the yard there, they give away many dark things — so our sort, as I say, goes deeper into secrets than the priest or the doctor —

*Theresa.*— Yes — I know it. So here we were spied upon for fifteen years, and you have the brazen boldness to brag about it.

*Valenta.*— But, *Gnädige*, when I mentioned it to the doctor he was not a bit excited about it. I told him the same that I told you, but he only smiled and told me to call a little later. And I watched him all these years, there in his room at his desk where he sat over his masses of law papers and books, just as I watched the young man, his assistant. They used to sit in there and you used to sit at the window. There was also a couch, — it is not here now — You sat alone and sewed and sang. And right here over your head hung a beautiful little canary which sang loudly as though it wanted to compete with you. What became of it — did it die — the poor, dear thing?

*Theresa.*— Keep quiet, man, for heaven's sake, keep quiet.

*Valenta.*— I used to envy you this peaceful, well-regulated life, *Gnädige Frau*. Right over there in the hall hung a large picture — it's not there any longer either. (*Looks about.*) "You have moved and changed it all — and it is a long time since you sang, *Gnädige*."

*Theresa.*— Why are you torturing me?

*Valenta.*— I — *Gnädige* — heaven forbid — Good Lord, your simple life, — at least, the way I saw it, — (*looking intently at her*) gives you no reason for alarm or reproach.

*Theresa.*— Listen, my man, why then are you telling me all this, and what are you bothering me for? When my husband comes, I'll tell him to have nothing to do with you. I do not want you in my house. A man who spies on his neighbors for fifteen years is a shameless fellow.

*Valenta.*— Especially if he keeps quiet about it.

*Theresa.*— You know nothing at all, nothing.

*Valenta.*— Yes, I saw it.

*Theresa.*— From across there?

*Valenta.*— Yes. One afternoon, the doctor was down town and the servant girl was out of the house. You were alone. You sat here, your sewing in your hands, looking at an open door. Then from the adjoining room the young gentleman came in and looked at you so lovingly. I seem to see it even now. He held a cigar between his fingers and sat down (*does likewise*) on the edge of this table.

*Theresa.*— Why do you remind me of it?

*Valenta.*— So you'd know that I know it, *Gnädige Frau*. He stood here and talked and talked to you a long while. I was looking at you all the time and was getting tired of it. He had talked to you in that way many a time before, and then quietly went away. But on this particular day when he stood against the table he spoke so vehemently —

*Theresa.*— Be silent!

*Valenta.*— Well, I am not saying anything, not a word. You resisted him as much as you could. I can't deny that — but in the end —

*Theresa.*— Keep still, you wretch!

*Valenta (coming nearer to her).*— Well, *Gnädige Frau*, you put in a good word for me with the doctor — and you will see how discreet I can be — an old veteran like myself — believe me, I can't even remember such little trifles — but you reminded me of it with your excitement. Who'd think of it — What's happened, has happened, now we must be good friends and help each other.

*Theresa.*— God, this is dreadful. We must help each other — this man has the audacity to tell me this so quietly because he knows of my sins. You are an evil and dangerous fellow.

*Valenta.*— No, *Gnädige*, I am not.

*Theresa.*— Prove it then, swear that you will never utter a word, and that you will go away and never cross my husband's or my path.

*Valenta.*— But, *Gnädige Frau*, I am a poor, miserable man. My enemies have ruined me. I have nothing to eat. I am penniless.

*Theresa.*— So that's the game. (*Goes into adjoining room.*) Wait — (*Short pause. She returns presently with a roll of bank notes.*) There you are. There's more there than you expected.

*Valenta* (*just glances at the bank notes, then quickly puts them into his coat pocket*).— God bless you, *Gnädige Frau*.

*Theresa.*— Now, go quickly — and don't let me hear from you again.

*Valenta.*— No — no. I'll leave the city to-day, and you shall never see me again.

*Theresa.*— Thank God for that.

*Valenta.*— You have saved a destitute man, *Gnädige Frau*. (*He takes her hand and wants to kiss it; she quickly withdraws it and points to the door.*)

*Theresa.*— Go! — and quickly —

(*VALENTA exit.*)

*Theresa* (*sighs*).— That's over, God! Now for a new, clean life. (*Calls.*) Mary! Is there no one here? (*Calls.*) Mary! (*Runs from one door to another excitedly.*) Always alone — always. (*Presses bell-button nervously, and continuously.*) God! (*She clenches her hands and brings one to her lips.*)

*Mary.*— You rang, *Gnädige Frau*?

*Theresa.*— Where have you been all this time? There's no one in the whole house. Nice order! A strange man walks

right into this dining-room without ringing — and I had my hands full to get rid of him.

*Mary.*— You have forgotten, *Gnädige Frau*, that you sent me to urge the expressman to come. He is on his way now.

*Theresa.*— Of course, I sent you. But why did you leave the hall door wide open?

*Mary.*— The doctor was the last one to leave, *Gnädige Frau*, he probably left it open. I am always careful about the hall door.

*Theresa.*— You always have an excuse for everything.

*Mary (going to the window).*— We'd better begin to get ready. The van and moving men are out there.

(*THERESA goes to the window and looks.*)

*Mary.*— But Lord, look, what is that — two men are fighting down there.

*Theresa.*— God Almighty, that's the same man!

*Mary.*— And the other fellow does not want to let him go. Look at the crowd — how they run! Too bad we can't hear what they have to say up here. Here's the doctor, *Gnädige Frau*. He is taking that man's part — that old man's — he talks to the other fellow — they are quiet now — they are coming up here. (*Turning to THERESA.*) Is that the man who frightened you so badly, *Gnädige Frau*?

*Theresa (extremely upset).*— Yes.

*Mary.*— Here they are.

(*Enter DR. KORBER, followed by a plainclothes policeman, who is handcuffed to VALENTA.*)

*Policeman.*— Begging your pardon, *Gnädige Frau*, for intruding, but this fellow (*pointing to VALENTA*) was discharged from the crazy-house for bribery and drug-selling, and we had him under surveillance. We saw him enter your house, and after a while he re-appeared and was in a great hurry. I stopped him but he acted so suspiciously that I searched him and found in his possession the bank roll (*showing money*), about five hundred dollars. I wanted to take him to the station-house quietly, he



protested, so I had to use force. Then your husband came by, and we thought we'd all come up to investigate.

*Iustus.*— This man was our neighbor for fifteen years, and he asked me for employment this morning.

*Valenta.*— Yes, this gentleman told me to call here for a job, but he was not at home.

*Policeman.*— That part of your story is quite right, old chap, But what did you do here when the boss was out?

*Theresa.*— He asked me for work.

*Policeman.*— But the money?

*Iustus.*— Money?

*Policeman.*— Yes, that's why I pinched him. A man like he never had that much money in his life. They (*pointing to the window*) don't get that in two years, in salaries.

(*VALENTA is silent.*)

*Policeman.*— You people would better look over your things here. If this money does not belong here, it belongs some other place. We'll find out soon enough. We'd better be going. (*Wants to lead VALENTA away.*)

*Theresa.*— It was my money, I gave it to him. Let him go, he's innocent.

(*The POLICEMAN, surprised, looks from KORBER to THERESA, and then at KORBER again. Short pause.*)

*Iustus.*— Well, officer, if my wife says so, it must be true. Let him go and please go, too.

*Policeman.*— Begging your pardon, sir, no harm meant, I was just doing my duty.

*Iustus.*— I understand — it's all right. I thank you.

*Policeman (to VALENTA).*— Now, get yourself away as soon as you can.

*Iustus (to POLICEMAN).*— You leave him here a while. Good-bye, officer.

(*OFFICER leaves. Long pause. KORBER is pacing up and down the room, goes over to the mantel and picks up the papers left by CERNIK. THERESA is standing by the window, her back to*



audience and to KORBER. VALENTA is nervously fingering his cap. He is standing at the door and is looking at bank roll left on the table.)

Iustus (to VALENTA).— You were a keeper in the insane asylum over there?

Valenta.— Yes, sir.

Iustus.— And you were discharged, and came to ask me for employment?

Valenta.— Yes, sir.

Iustus.— Then you did not find me at home, when you called?

Valenta.— No, sir.

Iustus (to THERESA).— Did you give this man five hundred dollars, Theresa?

Theresa (still in the same position).— I did.

Iustus.— You told me that you watched my house carefully for fifteen years, and you knew what went on there.

Valenta.— Yes, I did.

Iustus.— Dr. Cernik's boat leaves Hamburg to-morrow morning, Theresa.

Theresa.— Does it?

Iustus.— He was here and told you. (*Pointing to papers on the mantel.*)

Theresa.— He was, but he did not say.

Iustus (to VALENTA).— Sit down. (VALENTA takes a seat at the table.) What did you say to my wife when you called here to-day, and what did she tell you. Now tell me all you know.

Theresa (turning to IUSTUS).— Excuse me, Iustus. At what time does the next train leave for Hamburg?

Iustus.— Seven-twenty. You still have time.

Theresa.— I'll get my hat and coat in the meantime. (*Exit. Goes to adjoining room.*)

Iustus (taking seat).— Now you shall tell me just all you said to my wife this morning, and all she said to you. Everything!

Valenta (moving about uneasily in the chair).— Well, doctor,

it was like this. I am a poor, miserable, penniless fellow. I have a lot of enemies.

*(From the adjoining room a revolver shot is heard. IUSTUS rushes into that room. VALENTA picks up money on the table, puts his cap on and goes out.)*

CURTAIN

# SHAMBLES

## A SKETCH OF THE PRESENT WAR

BY HENRY T. SCHNITTKIND, PH. D.

### CHARACTERS

GRANDFATHER.

GRANDMOTHER.

GRANDSON, *five years old.*

HIS FATHER.

PRIEST.

*Scene: A shabbily-furnished, ill-smelling room of a shanty situated in any part of Europe at the present time. Through a window in the background can be seen a garden overgrown with weeds and skirted by a tumble-down fence. Twilight.*

*Grandmother (trying to put her little grandson to sleep, croons softly).—*The sun that is lost in the night

Comes riding again in the dawn;  
But my boys were called to the fight,  
And my sunlight forever is gone.

*Little Boy (whimpering).—*Granny.

*Grandmother.—*Yes, dear.

*Little Boy.—*Granny, I'm hungry.

*Grandmother.—*Now, keep still, like a good boy. Try to fall asleep. (*She continues her crooning.*)

The waves that are whirled to the shore,  
Return to the arms of the sea;  
But my sons are gone to the war,  
And they'll never be coming to me.

*Little Boy.—*I want to eat, granny.

*Grandmother.*— Wait till your daddy comes.

*Little Boy.*— Where's daddy?

*Grandmother.*— Daddy's gone to the war.

*Little Boy.*— What's that, granny? Is war a nice place where papa'll get somethin' to eat for me?

*Grandmother.*— Go to sleep now.

*Little Boy.*— I want to eat! I want daddy!

*Grandmother.*— Hush, child, hush! (*She continues her melancholy lullaby.*)

Now, don't you be staring so wild,—

For the menfolk must battle and die,

Whilst mother and sister and child

Must weep till their eyes be dry.

*Little Boy.*— Don't sing this, granny. It makes me feel awfully 'fraid.

*Grandmother.*— A fine little hero you are! You hardly deserve to have a soldier for a father.

*Little Boy.*— Granny, dear.

*Grandmother.*— Yes.

*Little Boy.*— What's a soldier?

*Grandmother.*— A soldier is a man who tries to kill the enemy.

*Little Boy.*— What's the enemy? Is it a great big giant or a wild animal what wants to hurt us?

*Grandmother.*— No, dear. The enemy are people just like us.

*Little Boy.*— Tell me, granny. Has the enemy got little children what's hungry, just like me?

*Grandmother.*— Yes, indeed.

*Little Boy.*— Then why do we try to kill the enemy?

*Grandmother.*— Wait till you grow up to be a big man, and then you'll know.

*Little Boy.*— Does the big men what's all grown up know why they try to kill the enemy?

*Grandmother.*— Now won't you stop plaguing me with your foolish questions?

*Little Boy.*— Granny!

*Grandmother (beginning to lose her patience).—*Well, what now?

*Little Boy.—*I want my mama.

*Grandmother (trying to suppress her tears).—*You know you can't see mama.

*Little Boy.—*Why can't I see her?

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*Grandmother.—*Papa's gone to the war.

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*Grandmother (crushes him to her breast, as her entire frame shakes with her sobs).—*You're a bad boy to-day, sonny.

*Little Boy.—*I ain't a bad boy. (*Drowsily.*) Granny, when the angels took mumsy away, wasn't they sorry for me? (*Almost in a whisper, as he is falling asleep.*) Say, granny, was it the angels that sent papa away to the war? (*He sleeps. His GRANDMOTHER puts him on a couch where he tosses restlessly.*)

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*Grandfather.—*Yes, mother.

*Grandmother.—*Don't be sleeping there, father. Why don't

you help me fix up the room for our son? Here we are, expecting him from the war hospital, and you sit and doze there as if it's none of your business.

*Grandfather.*— Is little sonny asleep?

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*Grandfather.*— Of course he can't, poor lad. A fellow that's had his two legs shot away from his body can't very well be traveling around much. But that ain't what I mean.

*Grandmother (frightened, half-guessing his meaning).*— Don't, father! Come now, help me tidy up the room.

*Grandfather (cleaning up the room).*— There's no use fooling ourselves, mother. We might just as well get used to it, and then it won't come so hard later. Seems to me that letter was plain enough. Just listen to it again. (*Takes a letter from his pocket, spreads it on his knee, and reads it with difficulty, tracing the words with his forefinger as he reads.*) 'Dear Sir: Your son, as it has already been my sad duty to inform you about a month ago, has lost both his legs while heroically fighting the enemy. After a brave struggle at the hospital against the inevitable, he wishes once more to see his parents. We are therefore sending him home.'

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*Grandmother.*— You mean ——

(*GRANDFATHER shakes his head significantly.*)

*Grandmother (stops her work and looks at the sleeping little boy).*  
— Poor kid!

*Little Boy (tosses and speaks in his sleep).*— Give me another piggy-back, daddy!

*Grandmother.*— Do you know, father, I've been thinking.

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*Grandfather (crosses himself).*— The Lord preserve us! What strange, ungodlike thoughts you've got into your head! Did n't the priest tell us that we ought to thank God when He allows us to sacrifice our sons for our country?

*Grandmother.*— I hope God will forgive me, but the more I think of it, the more it seems to me that it ain't right. Why should we have to send our sons away to the war like cattle to the shambles? Can God want us to do that?

*Grandfather.*— But the country needs 'em to fight.

*Grandmother (becoming more and more excited).*— Now just tell me who's the country? Ain't *we* the country? And do *we* want them to fight? What do *we* get out of the war, anyway? We get crusts of bread soaked in the blood of the children we have suckled. That's all *we* get out of the war. And at night, when the pillow is all wet with our tears, we remember how we've worked our hands to the bone and hungered and spent sleepless nights, so as to bring our little ones up to manhood. We remember the first time they began to toddle, looking up so timid-like into our eyes for fear we would let them fall down. And now those same feet have to be trampling over the dead and wounded bodies of men whom they've shot down. And we remember how their chubby little baby fingers would open like a lily in the morning, and clasp our necks till we'd think that we'd never want any better joy in the world to come. And now those same fingers are clotted with blood, and they have to pull the trigger and push the bayonet into warm, living, beating hearts.



Good God, is that all that a mother's love and a mother's heart-aches are good for?

*Grandfather.*— Mother, I don't understand you!

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*Grandfather.*— Why, it's us.

*Grandmother.*— Yes, us working people. We do the fighting, and when our lives are ruined and our sons are swept like so many rats into the grave, and when the new lands are won, and gold and silver and rich cloth and spices are brought in from those lands, do *we* get any of these good things? No. And was n't it *our* sons that died for them?

*Grandfather.*— You frighten me! You're making me think!

*Grandmother.*— Do you know, I believe it's the rich bankers and factory bosses and the like of them that want war.

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*Grandfather.*— I think women must be possessed of the devil nowadays. That's what I think.

*Little Boy (in his sleep).*— Oh, daddy an' mumsy, I'm so awfully glad you've come back! You'll never go away from me again, will you?

*Grandfather (looks at him for a moment, then stealthily wipes a tear in his eye).*— Mother, I guess we had better not talk any more about this. I'm afraid it'll make me think unholy thoughts.

*Little Boy (in his sleep).*— Say, mumsy, has the enemy in the war got mothers?

*Grandfather.*— I wish the kid would stop talking in his sleep. Seems to me he's feverish. (*A knock is heard.*)

*Grandmother.*— I wonder if they're bringing him now! (*She opens the door. Enter PRIEST, leaving the door open.*)

*Priest.*— Good afternoon, and may God bless you.

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*Grandfather.*— Mother, keep still! (*To PRIEST.*) You see, Father, she's somewhat upset. Women are so nervous.

*Priest.*— I hope our Heavenly Father will forgive those words of yours, even as I have forgiven them.

*Grandmother.*— Begging your pardon, Father, I don't want to be forgiven, if what I've said is sacrilege.

*Little Boy (in his sleep).*— I'm hungry, daddy. When are you comin' from the war? Will you bring me somethin' to eat?

*Grandmother (pointing to the LITTLE BOY).*— Maybe what he's saying is sacrilege, too?

*Grandfather (to himself).*— She may be right, after all.

protested, so I had to use force. Then your husband came by, and we thought we'd all come up to investigate.

*Iustus.*— This man was our neighbor for fifteen years, and he asked me for employment this morning.

*Valenta.*— Yes, this gentleman told me to call here for a job, but he was not at home.

*Policeman.*— That part of your story is quite right, old chap, But what did you do here when the boss was out?

*Theresa.*— He asked me for work.

*Policeman.*— But the money?

*Iustus.*— Money?

*Policeman.*— Yes, that's why I pinched him. A man like he never had that much money in his life. They (*pointing to the window*) don't get that in two years, in salaries.

(*VALENTA is silent.*)

*Policeman.*— You people would better look over your things here. If this money does not belong here, it belongs some other place. We'll find out soon enough. We'd better be going. (*Wants to lead VALENTA away.*)

*Theresa.*— It was my money, I gave it to him. Let him go, he's innocent.

(*The POLICEMAN, surprised, looks from KORBER to THERESA, and then at KORBER again. Short pause.*)

*Iustus.*— Well, officer, if my wife says so, it must be true. Let him go and please go, too.

*Policeman.*— Begging your pardon, sir, no harm meant, I was just doing my duty.

*Iustus.*— I understand — it's all right. I thank you.

*Policeman (to VALENTA).*— Now, get yourself away as soon as you can.

*Iustus (to POLICEMAN).*— You leave him here a while. Good-bye, officer.

(*OFFICER leaves. Long pause. KORBER is pacing up and down the room, goes over to the mantel and picks up the papers left by CERNIK. THERESA is standing by the window, her back to*

*audience and to KORBER. VALENTA is nervously fingering his cap. He is standing at the door and is looking at bank roll left on the table.)*

*Iustus (to VALENTA).—* You were a keeper in the insane asylum over there?

*Valenta.—* Yes, sir.

*Iustus.—* And you were discharged, and came to ask me for employment?

*Valenta.—* Yes, sir.

*Iustus.—* Then you did not find me at home, when you called?

*Valenta.—* No, sir.

*Iustus (to THERESA).—* Did you give this man five hundred dollars, Theresa?

*Theresa (still in the same position).—* I did.

*Iustus.—* You told me that you watched my house carefully for fifteen years, and you knew what went on there.

*Valenta.—* Yes, I did.

*Iustus.—* Dr. Cernik's boat leaves Hamburg to-morrow morning, Theresa.

*Theresa.—* Does it?

*Iustus.—* He was here and told you. (*Pointing to papers on the mantel.*)

*Theresa.—* He was, but he did not say.

*Iustus (to VALENTA).—* Sit down. (*VALENTA takes a seat at the table.*) What did you say to my wife when you called here to-day, and what did she tell you. Now tell me all you know.

*Theresa (turning to IUSTUS).—* Excuse me, Iustus. At what time does the next train leave for Hamburg?

*Iustus.—* Seven-twenty. You still have time.

*Theresa.—* I'll get my hat and coat in the meantime. (*Exit. Goes to adjoining room.*)

*Iustus (taking seat).—* Now you shall tell me just all you said to my wife this morning, and all she said to you. Everything!

*Valenta (moving about uneasily in the chair).—* Well, doctor,

it was like this. I am a poor, miserable, penniless fellow. I have a lot of enemies.

*(From the adjoining room a revolver shot is heard. IUSTUS rushes into that room. VALENTA picks up money on the table, puts his cap on and goes out.)*

CURTAIN

# SHAMBLES

## A SKETCH OF THE PRESENT WAR

BY HENRY T. SCHNITTKIND, PH. D.

### CHARACTERS

GRANDFATHER.

GRANDMOTHER.

GRANDSON, *five years old.*

HIS FATHER.

PRIEST.

*Scene: A shabbily-furnished, ill-smelling room of a shanty situated in any part of Europe at the present time. Through a window in the background can be seen a garden overgrown with weeds and skirted by a tumble-down fence. Twilight.*

*Grandmother (trying to put her little grandson to sleep, croons softly).—*The sun that is lost in the night

Comes riding again in the dawn;  
But my boys were called to the fight,  
And my sunlight forever is gone.

*Little Boy (whimpering).—*Granny.

*Grandmother.—*Yes, dear.

*Little Boy.—*Granny, I'm hungry.

*Grandmother.—*Now, keep still, like a good boy. Try to fall asleep. (*She continues her crooning.*)

The waves that are whirled to the shore,  
Return to the arms of the sea;  
But my sons are gone to the war,  
And they'll never be coming to me.

*Little Boy.—*I want to eat, granny.

*Grandmother.*— Wait till your daddy comes.

*Little Boy.*— Where's daddy?

*Grandmother.*— Daddy's gone to the war.

*Little Boy.*— What's that, granny? Is war a nice place where papa 'll get somethin' to eat for me?

*Grandmother.*— Go to sleep now.

*Little Boy.*— I want to eat! I want daddy!

*Grandmother.*— Hush, child, hush! (*She continues her melancholy lullaby.*)

Now, don't you be staring so wild,—

For the menfolk must battle and die,

Whilst mother and sister and child

Must weep till their eyes be dry.

*Little Boy.*— Don't sing this, granny. It makes me feel awfully 'fraid.

*Grandmother.*— A fine little hero you are! You hardly deserve to have a soldier for a father.

*Little Boy.*— Granny, dear.

*Grandmother.*— Yes.

*Little Boy.*— What's a soldier?

*Grandmother.*— A soldier is a man who tries to kill the enemy.

*Little Boy.*— What's the enemy? Is it a great big giant or a wild animal what wants to hurt us?

*Grandmother.*— No, dear. The enemy are people just like us.

*Little Boy.*— Tell me, granny. Has the enemy got little children what's hungry, just like me?

*Grandmother.*— Yes, indeed.

*Little Boy.*— Then why do we try to kill the enemy?

*Grandmother.*— Wait till you grow up to be a big man, and then you'll know.

*Little Boy.*— Does the big men what's all grown up know why they try to kill the enemy?

*Grandmother.*— Now won't you stop plaguing me with your foolish questions?

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*Grandmother (beginning to lose her patience).—*Well, what now?

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*Grandmother (trying to suppress her tears).—*You know you can't see mama.

*Little Boy.—*Why can't I see her?

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— Poor kid!

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*Grandfather (looks at him for a moment, then stealthily wipes a tear in his eye).*— Mother, I guess we had better not talk any more about this. I'm afraid it'll make me think unholy thoughts.

*Little Boy (in his sleep).*— Say, mumsy, has the enemy in the war got mothers?

*Grandfather.*— I wish the kid would stop talking in his sleep. Seems to me he's feverish. (*A knock is heard.*)

*Grandmother.*— I wonder if they're bringing him now! (*She opens the door. Enter PRIEST, leaving the door open.*)

*Priest.*— Good afternoon, and may God bless you.

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*Grandmother (pointing to the LITTLE BOY).*— Maybe what he's saying is sacrilege, too?

*Grandfather (to himself).*— She may be right, after all.

*Priest.*— My good woman, I confess that war is horrible and for that reason I have always prayed for universal peace. But when our superiors see fit to declare war upon another country, it is our sacred duty to encourage our soldiers to slay the enemy.

*Grandmother.*— That's just the trouble. You pray with your lips for peace, and with your hearts you lust for blood.

*Priest (suppressing his anger).*— Please do not be unreasonable, my good woman. I assure you my heart bleeds for every one of our boys who has to give his life to his country.

*Grandmother.*— You say your heart bleeds for the poor soldiers. Do you know what that means? Do you know how a mother's heart bleeds when her boy is lying wounded on the battlefield at night, while his living body is rotting away amidst the dead corpses? Do you know how a grandmother's heart bleeds when the lips of her little grandchild whimper, 'Say, granny, has the enemy got little children what's hungry like me?' Can you understand that, Father?

*Priest.*— God's will be done. No war is declared without the consent of Heaven.

*Grandmother.*— Now, look here. Why don't you be honest about it. When a king wants to get some silly thing he calls 'honor,' or when some rich people want to get new land, what's the use of dragging God's name into it? Is n't it enough that the people who make the wars tear up families without holding God responsible for it?

*Priest.*— My good woman, you make me speechless!

*Grandmother.*— So much the better! Then you would n't be telling people that God wants us to have wars. (*She gets up abruptly and walks to the couch, where she sits down, looking at the LITTLE BOY, and now and then nodding sadly.*)

*Little Boy (in his sleep).*— Oh, mumsy, I hears 'em! The angels is a-tellin' the soldiers not to kill the enemy! 'Cause they got little children an' mamas, just like us!

*Grandfather (in a low voice, showing the letter to the PRIEST).*— Does it mean that our son is expected to ——

*Priest (nods assent).*— I've come to see him before he passes away.

*Grandfather (becoming excited and clenching his fists).*— She's right! The old woman is right! Us poor working people get all the blood and the bullets in the war, and the other people get all the benefits! 'Taint right to make us fight their battles, is it?

*Priest.*— I sympathize with you in this hour of your affliction.

*Grandmother.*— Instead of sympathizing for them that get killed, you'd better be spending your time preaching against them that make the wars. Then you'd be doing God's work, instead of the devil's work, as you're doing now.

*(She lights the lamp. A faint murmur is heard outside, coming nearer very quickly. Soon fragmentary sentences are distinguishable: 'He's coming!' 'They're bringing him!' 'His two legs are shot clean away!' 'Poor people!' 'They say he can't live over night.' A large number of people approach the house, crowding around the windows and the open door. As they come near, their voices die down again to a whisper. They point to the occupants of the room, murmuring and nodding to one another. One voice, raised a little above a whisper, is heard to say, 'Yes, and they've got the priest all ready, too!')*

*Grandmother (having rushed to the door in trembling expectation).*— Where is he?

*One of the crowd.*— Right back there. They'll be here in a minute.

*Grandfather (goes to GRANDMOTHER and puts his arm around her shoulders).*— Brace up, mother.

*Grandmother (bitterly).*— Oh, I can stand it, all right.

*(An ambulance passes by the window. Immediately afterwards the son is carried in on a stretcher. He is very faint. His parents bend over him and kiss his lips. The hospital attendants lift him tenderly, without uncovering him, and put him on a bed.)*

*The Son (pointing at the blanket that covers him).*— You know, don't you?

*(His parents nod assent. Some of the more forward of the bystanders come into the room and group themselves around the bed. No one disturbs them.)*

*The Son (weakly).*— Where's the wife and the little boy?

*Grandmother.*— Here's the child, sound asleep, and your wife, why she —

*Grandfather (interrupting her).*— Oh, she's gone out — to —  
*(He breaks down and turns his head away.)*

*One of the Crowd.*— Poor people, they'll have to break the news to him pretty quick.

*Son (overhearing it).*— You might as well tell me. I understand it. Nothing will make much difference to me now. Is she — *(GRANDFATHER nods assent.)*

*Priest (to SON).*— Bear up, my son. Remember, the lives of our heroes and their dear ones are not lost in vain. In fighting the foes of your country, you have done God's work.

*Son (still speaking with an effort).*— Don't. I can bear everything, but not this lie. Don't mention God's name in my presence. I am a murderer!

*Grandmother (stroking his hair).*— Come, come, don't be thinking about that, dear. You must be tired from your journey. Try to sleep.

*Son.*— I'll be having sleep enough before long.

*Grandmother.*— Don't talk that way. You'll live, and we'll be happy yet.

*Son.*— The only happiness for me is a speedy death.

*Grandmother (misunderstanding him).*— No, don't say that. There are thousands of people that are crippled for life, and yet they can be happy.

*Son.*— It is n't that. It is n't my crippled body, but my crippled soul.

*Priest.*— Your parents and I have been praying for your soul every day.

*Son.*— Do you think God could hear your prayers when the gates of heaven were stormed with the wails of a thousand mothers

whose sons I and my companions have killed? Do you think He could look down upon me when everywhere could be seen the speechless mouths of babes dumbly asking for bread? With this hand I have ripped open a mother's breast as she was about to offer it to her infant's lips. Do you think that after this God can ever look down on me in compassion? Drunken with blood, I tore out the eyes of men that but a moment before could look upon the flowers and the sunlight. Can I dare now to raise my eyes to heaven? I cursed and I laughed when I saw a dog tugging away at the warm entrails of one of God's children. Can I now raise the same voice in prayer to heaven?

*Grandmother (horrified).*—Oh, my son, how could you? You who have always been so gentle that the sight of a hungry man would make you weep!

*Son.*—How could I? When the heavens rain fire upon your head and the earth gapes under your feet, then your senses are maddened and you do not know what you are doing. For several weeks we had tried to capture one of the towns belonging to the enemy, though why we tried to capture it, none of us could tell. As we made charge upon charge, we could see our comrades' blood whirled about us like spray in the tempest. The taste of blood was on my tongue. Wherever we charged, traps with pointed stakes at the bottom would open suddenly beneath our feet, and the next moment the bodies of our companions would writhe upon the spits like worms on a fish-hook. One day we had to cross a river. A whole regiment was ordered to dam up the waters so that the rest of us might pass over their dead bodies to the other shore. Once, as I was taking aim with my gun, a hot shower of blood blinded my eyes and a trunkless arm, with the fingers still writhing convulsively, flew against my breast. Good God, that same arm may have once stroked the hair of a prattling child! Perhaps the child at this very moment was calling for its father. You here will never know how the sight of human blood maddens one. We were beasts! The only reminders of manhood about us were the weapons of destruction orged by the brain of man!



*Grandmother lowers her head on his breast and weeps.*—My boy, my boy!

*Son becoming somewhat delirious.*—Don't touch me! Can't you smell the odor of blood on me? Don't you see shreds of human flesh clinging to my clothes?

*Grandmother still weeping, her head upon his breast.*—My son, my son!

*Son vehemently, with a supreme effort.*—At last, when we captured the town, we were so maddened that we mowed down every living object that came in our way. In one church we found a woman who was picking up the headless body of her child. Half in pity and half in fury, one of my companions ripped her body open with the sword. In another part of the town a number of our drunken soldiers were throwing little infants into the air and catching them on the points of their bayonets. And we are all, all of us, made in the image of God!

*Grandmother.*—Hush, hush! (She puts her hands to her eyes, as if to shut out the terrible picture.)

*Little Boy (awakened by the loud talk, begins to cry).*—Where's my papa?

*Grandfather (takes him in his arms, and brings him to the bed).*—Here's your papa.

*Little Boy.*—This ain't my papa. My papa's a big strong man, an' he always smiles to me, an' he takes me on his shoulders, an' he runs all over the house with me. This man is old an' he looks funny, an' his face is so skinny, an' it frightens me! He ain't my father. Take him away from here.

*Grandmother.*—Now be a good little boy and kiss him, for he is your papa.

*Little Boy.*—Then why didn't he bring somethin' nice to eat?

*Priest.*—Some one ought to take this child away from here for a few days. Then he'll be spared a good deal of suffering.

*Grandfather.*—You are right.

*A Woman.*—I'll take him to my house, if you don't mind. We'll take good care of him there.

*Grandmother.*— Please do.

*(The WOMAN is about to carry the BOY out.)*

*Grandmother (unable to restrain her tears).*— Say good-bye to papa, sonny.

*Her Son (holds out his arms to little BOY).*— Good-bye, my child, and may God take you away before ever you grow up to be a soldier! This is the only blessing I can give you.

*Little Boy (shrinks).*— I want to go away! I want my papa! I hate this horrid man!

*(WOMAN takes him away, whimpering.)*

*Son (the muscles of his face twitching as he sees this, tries to sit up, but falls back, his body writhing visibly under the cover).*— I'm fainting!

*(The PRIEST runs to his side with the open Bible in his hand. The SON motions him away with the little strength he has left. Then his hand falls to his side lifeless. He lies still.)*

*Grandmother.*— My son! Speak to me!

*Priest.*— His soul is safe in the keeping of our Heavenly Father.

*(GRANDFATHER shuts the eyes and covers the face of his son. The PRIEST goes out quietly. After him, one by one, the PEOPLE depart slowly, leaving the old parents alone with the dead body.)*

*Grandmother.*— And now he, too, has been taken away. The war has gathered the harvest. We old ones, the useless chaff, we're all that's left over.

*Grandfather.*— Aye, but the little one is left, too.

*Grandmother.*— He, too, like his father, will be dragged away to the shambles of war when he grows to be a man. War will always be waiting for the strongest and the best, unless ——

*Grandfather.*— Unless what?

CURTAIN

# THE ART OF 'HUMILIS'\*

BY MAURICE SAINT-CHAMARAND

**I**N the course of the year 1904, M. Léonce de Larmandie, sole possessor for more than twenty years of the manuscript poems, whose real author (let us designate him by his initials G. N.) refused to recognize his paternity,— M. de Larmandie had issued, in an incomplete brochure addressed to a few privileged readers, some of the most beautiful poems of the said G. N., under the ægis of *La Société des Poètes Français*, and in the hope of drawing these poems at last out of their obscurity! But whether public opinion was not favorable enough to the humble poet's verses, or *La Société des Poètes Français* had other preoccupations at that time, the fact remains that these poems, without an acknowledged father, and deprived in a sense of any civil status, had to undergo the fate of those foundlings who are confined in obscure asylums, like children abandoned to the mercies of society.

Two years later I met M. de Larmandie, who read me some of the poems, and then, at my request, all the poems of G. N., and proposed to me that I consecrate the pages of *La Poétique* to the glorification and publication of the masterpiece of the nameless poet, to-day 'Humilis.'

Glorification! masterpiece! these are big words; and, if the first can still be understood in speaking of mystical poetry, the second may appear excessive to those who, to calm the susceptibilities of their contemporaries, demean themselves with too

\*In introducing the work of 'Humilis' to the English-speaking public as a possible candidate for the Nobel prize in literature, a word of explanation and reassurance is necessary. The story told by the Comte de Larmandie is not only absolutely true, but the identity of 'Humilis' is vouched for by such prominent men and women as MM. Auguste Rodin, Jean Aicard, Leon Dierx, Auguste Dorchain, Jean Richepin and Mme. Hélène Vacaresco. To relieve the wandering poet's pressing necessities an edition of his poems, adorned by four unpublished designs of M. Rodin, has been issued at twenty francs by the review *La Poétique*, 39, rue d'Artois, Paris. It is limited to three hundred copies, and is interesting to Rodin collectors. We are able from another source to inform our readers that the poet's real name is Joseph-Germain Nouveau. He is an old man now, yet he is still begging his way from town to town through the war-exhausted fields of France accompanied by the shadow of Blessed Benedict Labré, who, as he firmly believes, watches over his fortunes. (THE EDITOR.)

hasty admirations, and pretend never to concern themselves with the judgments of posterity.

But first, where does posterity commence, and where does it end? And is posterity herself so infallible in her judgments?

You have the example of Ronsard, immortalized while living; dupe of the stroke of a pen which made him descend suddenly from the summits of Parnassus; ignored by many successive generations, to reappear three centuries later, still applauded, and how astonished to find himself again in our midst!

If, then, posterity has its weaknesses, you will pardon us also for ours, and for exalting before you, according to our optimism and our sympathies, the work of an obscure poet whose reason has been shipwrecked in boundless spiritualities and immanent felicities, to whose glorification he vowed his humble masterpiece.

His name: we shall only remember that which he gave himself one day, when pressed by M. de Larmandie to have his work published, he cried: 'If ever I publish my verses, they shall appear under the name of "Humilis."'

His story: it is that of a mediæval pilgrim, of a twentieth century vagabond. He wanders somehow from city to city, and visits mystical cities by preference. He goes poor and humble, according to Scripture, and has chosen Benedict Labré as his patron. Happy in that contemplative life which he has celebrated in one of his most ecstatic poems, he passes like 'the swallow of the highways' who depends for all things on the hand of God, and he eats the bread of angels more often than the bread of men.

His work, like his name, like his story, is to-day a legend. He has composed his poems, they have been for over a quarter of a century 'for the saints and angels,' as he cries in devotion, and, always with devotion, he wishes to destroy them. He disavows first of all their paternity, we have said. As he celebrates, in one of his poems, the anonymity of the cathedrals, perhaps he wishes to emulate the glorious abnegation of their divine architects. He regards renown as an obstacle to his salvation. The first article of his faith is humility. And now to the poet who

refuses glory, glory comes; she comes not to him, but to the very work of his humility.

M. de Larmandie will relate to what devices, to what subterfuges he has had to have recourse in order to guard a copy of these precious poems.

Meanwhile, religious scruples came to the poet. At first, in order not to reveal his real sentiments, like a new Virgil, he blamed his work (according to him, imperfect) for the obstinacy which he showed in wishing to make these poems disappear. An intense purist he went so far as to pretend that the modern French tongue, surcharged with articles and relative particles, was unfit to present mystical ideas in sufficiently simple form. His work has now proven the contrary.

For my part, I attribute to theological reasons the destructively obstinate determination of this Saturnian poet to devour his own children, and I have good grounds for my belief that he was seized with a tardy, holy terror for certain pages of his gospel where he exalted the future humanity of his dreams, in strophes with a quasi-pagan fervor, less conformable, no doubt, to rigorous orthodoxy than to certain subversive theories of the Virgin-Mother and other philosophic devotions of Auguste Comte, the founder of positivism.

Whether or not he had been forced to dread the fires of the secular power (quite platonic to-day), Humilis, I suspect, feared the faggot for his soul; and the torch of the *auto-da-fé* ever real in his eyes, most unfortunately affect his conscience and his reason.

Visionary, he has been able to follow a dizzy path; a poet, he always finds a wisdom or a truth to sing. Having to separate with difficulty his spirit of dreams from positivism, being obliged to harmonize his philosophy of yesterday with his fervor of to-day, in his Christian dream he opposes to the fall of man and the lost paradise of Genesis the superior future of a humanity grown wise in the recovered paradise of his orthodoxy. Moreover, it is not for a vain dream or a doubtful harmony that he praises the humblest flowers of human wisdom: charity, chastity, poverty, humility; that he celebrates the humble hands which, says he, revealed the lyre to antiquity; that he adores the blue serenity

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of the Child Jesus and the Virgin; that he cuts and carves his marvellous periods in the living stone of the cathedrals and the Christian thought of the Middle Ages; that he sings the joy of light on every tomb, or seeks below the earth the tenebrous word of enigma and resurrection. He sees, he announces, in times that the multitude has not arrested, this submissive humanity, happy, grown wise, yielding to the Master's Spirit, to the Spouse's precepts, and doubtless delivered from the original defect which bore heavily upon it. Man has reversed all his science and pride, and broken all his gods, all his Baals and Molochs. He has accomplished finally his anarchic, but peaceful dream.

A naive and eloquent painting the poet has made of this earth renewed by faith and peopled by the elect and predestined! They are laborers, shepherds, poets, good astrologers, 'divine workmen whose heaven is content,' or more often they are all children, children whom the Master calls to Him, and whom He offers as an example to the pharisees and the subtle discoursing theologians, saying to them: 'Heaven is for those who are like one another.'

These, it seems to me, are the supreme thoughts of 'Humilis' and the secret confidences of his philosophy; and in default of a more complete interpretation of his work, we have the joy of understanding the sum of idealism, love and poetry which his poems contain. A poet, he does not linger at the crossroads of schools, disputes and systems; but his work offers us an unappreciable field of new ideas and fertile sensations.

# THE STORY OF J. G. N., CALLED 'HUMILIS'

BY COMTE LEONCE DE LARMANDIE

## I

**T**OWARD the close of the year 1878, while yet figuring as a minor employee in the Ministry of —, at the end of a dull, misty afternoon in October, I was moodily going along the Quai d'Orsay, to enter my poor young man's garret, in the Rue de Lille, Hotel des Ambassadeurs (O irony of names!).

Since I had crossed the Rue de Grenelle, I had noticed, preceding me by a few paces, a swarthy, thick-set little man, about my own age, going along nonchalantly with a sad expression. I was idly interested in meeting this unknown figure, and took pleasure in following him first along the Rue de Bellechasse, then over the pavements of the Quai, going up again toward the Caisse des Consignations.

Passing in front of the barracks, now demolished and replaced by the Gare d'Orleans, the individual stopped short, considered for a few seconds a postern which seemed condemned, drew from his pocket a bit of chalk and traced some lines with methodical leisure and without the slightest hesitation. I, paused and read them:

"Les vers des tourlourous sont toujours amusants.  
Ils retracent d'abord leurs gestes paysans;  
Se plaignent que d'ecus on ne les couvre guère,  
Préfèrent constamment leur payse à la guerre."

I imagined that, from the fact of this quatrain, French poetry was not likely to be remarkably enriched,— if the opulence

of the rhymes were once set aside. The poet turned round suddenly and sharply exclaimed in my face:

‘You are also in the ministry?’

‘Why, yes.’

‘I have seen you going out.’

‘In what office are you?’

‘With Magnabal.

‘Poor man! how sorry I am for you!’

‘And you?’

‘With Dumesnil. That is a little better.’

And I asked him his name.

‘J. G. N.,’ he replied,—‘moral great-grand-nephew of Joseph Benedict Labré. I do not ask your name, for I know you are the famous L ——’

‘Why famous?’

‘They call you original and independent.’

‘Well, my dear J. G. N., we can match one another, I think.’

‘As you like. I have a thousand verses like those you have just read. I call them my barracksmen. I have not found a publisher; L —— does not find them interesting; J —— asks five hundred francs. Don’t you think it is absurd?’

‘Absolutely.’

‘Farewell, monsieur, till to-morrow.’

Some hours later my concierge handed me a bundle of papers. They were the promised verses of J. G. N., and were as bad as those traced on the gate of the barracks. Next day, at the ministry, I made inquiries among various people, and the replies which I received seemed unanimous.

This dreamer, this morose man, snorting at his task, scribbled rather poor verses from time to time; the division superintendent, Magnabal, called him a bad employee; his comrades looked upon him as a fool; the sub-superintendent said: ‘To be a fool is one thing; but I believe that there is something interesting in that sad, cloudy head.’



II

I left the ministry about 1880, and for eighteen months heard nothing more of J. G. N. We never met, and we disdained looking each other up. In the spring of '81, on the 18th of March, to be precise, crossing the Seine by the Pont des Saints-Pères, I perceived my J. G. N., who stopped me with the gesture of a prophet, a grave and collected countenance, an attitude of compunction, and a mystical gaze.

'Is it you?' he said.

'It certainly is.'

'I shall not ask you how you are, or if you slept well last night. We have graver questions to discuss.'

'The barracks?'

'Perhaps.'

'Benedict Labré?'

'Why not? He is the greatest of the Saints. Moreover I have made poetry out of his filthiness.'

'Aha!'

'*Sapiens nihil affirmat quod non probet.* Do you wish to hear me?'

'I am all ears.'

And J. G. N. recited:

'Je sais que notre temps dédaigne  
Les coquilles de son chapeau,  
Et qu'un lâche étonnement règne  
Devant les ombres de sa peau.  
L'âme en est-elle atténuée?  
Et qu'importe au ciel sa nuée,  
Qu'importe au miroir sa buée,  
Si Dieu splendide aime à s'y voir!  
La gangue au diamant s'allie,  
Toi, tu peins ta lèvre pâlie  
Luxure, — et toi, Vertu salie;  
C'est là ton fard mystique et noir.'

I was stunned. This bizarre and incoherent man had proven that he was a great poet. Without noticing my amazement, J. G. N. thus questioned me:

‘Are you a Catholic?’

‘Certainly.’

‘A good Catholic?’

‘As good as possible, with a train of human weaknesses, you know.’

‘Ah! they are not necessary.’

‘They should not be necessary.’

‘Do you go to Mass?’

‘Yes.’

‘To confession and communion?’

‘At least once a year.’

‘What lukewarmness! You must have more zeal in the Lord’s service.’

‘I am not a saint.’

‘You are in the wrong. . . . Do you abstain from meat?’

‘Most of the time.’

‘Do you fast?’

‘Ah! that ——’

‘What! You do not fast? You are not a good Christian. The verses which I am going to recite to you are a part of a great poem dedicated to the glory of religion. If you wish to hear them?’

‘Why, certainly.’

‘But you will fast?’

‘We shall see.’

‘No, no, you will fast! I wish to make you a good Christian, and without fasting, you know ——’

‘We are listening all this time for your poems.’

‘In the street?’

‘No, let us go to the Café Vonflie.’

‘Very well, but you see that fasting is a hardship, without which you cannot mortify the flesh.’

Through the Rue des Saints-Pères, the Rue du Cherche-Midi, and the Rue du Regard, we went towards Number 2, Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, the celebrated Café Vonflie, where many joyous hours of my youth have slipped away.

We sat down at a table inside the smoking-room, and I offered dinner to my companion, who first made some difficulties.

'I assure you, *mon cher*, that to prepare to recite the praises of the Most High, it would be better to fast.'

'I disagree with you. You would recite badly and I should listen even worse.'

'You insist?'

'I insist.'

'Very well. I yield. I am in the wrong.'

'Let us eat.'

The faster proved to have a superb appetite; he drank so freely that slight signs of intoxication appeared in his face. Then suddenly he fell asleep for three-quarters of an hour.

When he awoke, taking up once more the course of his ideas, he went on:— 'Ah! *mon cher*, how wrong we were not to fast! One must be so pure to chant the praises of God. One must resemble my moral great-grand-uncle Benedict Labré, even by ——'

'J. G. N., I am listening.'

My acolyte closed his eyes and joined his hands; we were alone in the feebly-lighted room, and Vonflie, with the benevolently grimacing head of a *genius loci*, watched over our tranquillity. It was half past nine in the evening. In a clear voice, with extreme slowness and in an ecstatic attitude, J. G. N. began to intone his work; pausing every five minutes, he went on with his extraordinary subverted psalmody into the latest hours of the night. The legal hour of closing was long since past. I was stupefied, dazzled, crushed.

This strange man was letting me listen to the most beautiful hymn to the Divine Glory that I had ever heard; superior to the

choruses of 'Athalie,' the 'Méditations' of Lamartine, the 'Sagesse' of Verlaine.

I exclaimed: 'When are you going to publish them?'

'There is no reason for haste.'

'What! there is every reason. — It means glory and money.'

'And Holy Humility, Satan that you are.'

'Bah!'

'Bad Christian?'

'As good as you are.'

'We should have fasted.'

'Your appetite was superb!'

'I was in the wrong. — I must do penance. You will be the cause of my passing the rest of the night kneeling on a steel ruler; and it is no fun, I assure you.'

'I believe you.'

'Have you tried this fruitful mortification?'

'Never.'

'Do you wish to keep me company?'

'I would rather listen to more verses, stretched on a comfortable lounge.'

'Your religion is effeminate.'

'Have you a manuscript?'

'They are all in my memory still.'

'Then transcribe them for me.'

'What is the use? You invite me to sin through pride.'

'Simply as a copyist, — in the interests of heaven.'

'God has no need of us.'

'Go ahead, you triple-dyed fool!'

'I imitate from afar — or more often I endeavor to imitate my moral great-grand-uncle, the incomparable Labré. You will see that after death, the Vermin will change into a flood of stars.'

'No doubt.'

### III

A few months later, the powers of the ministry who had not pardoned in J. G. N. a useless but resounding despatch, made him

understand that his resignation would be favorably received. The poet did not haggle over this satisfaction to the mandarins of the Rue de Grenelle; he then fulfilled a promise by confiding to me the wonderful manuscript of the 'Doctrine of Love'; but with the injunction not to reveal to whom it belonged.

'This book, if ever it appears,' said he, 'will be entitled "The Doctrine of Love," and will be signed *G. N. Humilis*.'

'That is too didactic. I should prefer *Gloria in Excelsis*.'

'The demon of pride. Try to be humble.'

'Then you must try to look for glory.'

'My glory is the imitation of ——'

'Yes, I know.'

Now J. G. N. began to hate his work, his masterpiece. He hedged like this: 'I must be humble above all, and think of Labré, my dear, great saint. And then my verses are really very imperfect, in the presence of the great subject which they have dared to treat. It is pure folly; I was mad when I wrote them.'

After leaving the ministry, J. G. N. made the acquaintance of a good Maronite called Father Spath. This Father Spath was on a collecting trip to Latin countries. The poet became enthusiastic over the tales of this monk from beyond the Mediterranean, and decided to accompany him to Lebanon. His absence was prolonged for nearly two years. I silently rejoiced at this exodus when I thought of the magnificent poems that our friend was likely to bring back to us, after gazing at biblical lands with his seeing eye. On his return from Palestine, J. G. N. showed me a bulky poem entitled 'Valentines. Alas! 'Valentines,' though well-written perhaps, did not recall in the least the poet's inspired chant of divine splendors.

By dint of searching and supplication he had obtained from I know not what unhappy printer, the composition of the work, and I can see him yet, merrily landing at my door with the complete proofs under his arm.

'My dear friend,' he cried, 'you are going to do me a great service.'

'How?'

'Oh! nothing. I ask pardon of God, of man, and of you. I was crazy; I have returned with sane ideas. I simply wish to beg, to conjure, to supplicate you to write a preface for me.'

'I would rather write a preface for 'The Doctrine of Love.'

'Do not speak of that book again.'

'What?'

'No, I beg of you. And, by the way, you are going to return the manuscript to me, so that I may burn it.'

'You are mad.'

'I was mad when I composed those ineptitudes.'

'You are at this moment.'

'No, *you* are; but to return to the subject; will you preface my 'Valentines?'

'Yes.'

'What do you think of them?'

'I have told you; I like the others better.'

'Ah! fool, triple fool, a romantic book! I was still under the influence of that idiot of a Hugo to whose memory I have composed this verse, which is good:

'Bobine de rimeur gâteusement sonore (!).'

'You have done better.'

'It is one of my best. Ah! *mon cher*, Hugo and all his tribe, how miserable they are! Speak to me of Malherbe who wrote thirty verses a year.'

'I'll write the preface.'

'Yes. I tire you, don't I?'

'No.'

'You don't agree with me?'

'No.'

'But you'll do what I ask?'

'Yes.'

'Good. One word more.'

'Yes.'

'On the difficulties of your task.'

'Yes.'

'You must demonstrate that this book of "Valentines," with its air of triviality ——'

'Yes ——?'

'That this book is identical at bottom with the miserable still-born *factum* which you like so much; only that it is much better conceived and considerably better written.'

'You desire this blasphemy?'

'Yes.'

'You shall have it.'

'And I want something convincing.'

'There *mon cher!* ——'

'Ah! you are not convinced.'

'No.'

'You are crazy.'

'Have you asked Saint-Croix?'

'He is crazy.'

'D'Artois?'

'He is crazy.'

'Dierx? Bloy? Marguerite? Delahaye ——?'

'Crazy, *mon cher*, all crazy!!! You name all these madmen, and forget to add your own name to the series.'

'And yours?'

'I alone have the exact vision.'

'I'll preface it; and the recompense?'

'Whatever you say.'

'Then let me keep *the other* a while longer.'

'You are decidedly mad to link them. The book is damned; it will expiate in flames the shame of having failed to see the light.'

'I fulfilled my promise exactly and cooked up a preface which was subtle, and affected to demonstrate the identity of a licentious

and vulgar poem with the most beautiful mystical pages that were ever written.

In a week I had it all patched up. J. G. N. was delighted: 'In good time,' he cried, 'I knew you would come to your senses. Ah! Malherbe, the great man.'

'You are going to publish it?'

'Why certainly.'

J. G. N. did not publish 'Valentines.' He was seized by tardy scruples, destroyed the proofs, including my preface, and even found means to destroy the type. I have been told since that a well-known publisher guards a set of the proofs.

#### IV

Appointed to conduct a course of design in the *lycees* of the city of Paris, for he had a clever pencil, the poet was suddenly seized with a fit of dementia, under the following circumstances. One day at the opening of the class, he said to his pupils: 'Design is not all, there is also music, and I only admit of sacred music. Do not speak to me of Wagner. There is a man who has been proclaimed a genius for having loudly orchestrated complex legends.' And he began to intone liturgical vespers. They interned him at Bicêtre, where I went to see him one day. I found myself in the presence of a gentle, spiritually resigned man, who had at times even judicious opinions on life. But Humilis always disapproved of his masterpiece.

'Ah! *mon cher*, my mystical verses! A pure and simple blasphemy meriting excommunication, if the quite special indulgence of the court of Rome does not intervene.'

'How is that?'

'*Mon cher*, only soutanes have the right to treat these subjects; a layman exposes himself to heresies, and heresy (*dame!*) means the faggot. And behold another proof of the divine mercy: my sojourn here is my expiation; I pay for my poetic folly by being cloistered in a madhouse, for they think I am crazy. It is fantastic. I! One of the most lucid men of my generation!'



I replied: 'Evidently. Are you well-nourished?'

'Much better than Benedict Labré.'

'Have you any cause for complaint?'

'No, except that they prevent me from going to vespers to avoid, they say, nourishing my mysticism; but I play them a trick. I have my liturgy and rubrics at my finger-tips; they do not wish me to hear vespers — I chant them —. Mad men have every right. Now, I am officially mad.'

'What shall I say to your friends?'

'Nothing; in the first place, I have no friends.'

'And Saint-Croix?'

'He has offended me by praising my frightful book.'

'But I also have praised it.'

'Ah! yes, but with you it is an infatuation, a monomania; on this particular point you are crazy enough to be locked up. Conscientious alienists would send you here to keep me company.'

'You have no commission for any one?'

'You will give a sou for me to the *garçon* of the Hotel Saint-Joseph.'

'A sou?'

'Yes, *mon cher*, you will never miss it; it is a question of delicacy for me.'

'Ah! bah!'

'This sou I do not possess. I am obliged to ask you to advance it to me, is n't that so? Well! if I were to ask you for a hundred sous you would find it hard and with reason, too —. Now you see that I am not crazy. I am very lucid. Admit it —'

'Yes. That is quite evident.'

'Say especially that I am healthy in spirit,

Simplement j'expie

Un travail impie

Le plus insensé des duels\*

Et quelques plaisirs sensuels.

\*A duel without any sad consequences, but which had provoked his dismissal from the ministry.— L. DE L.

You see that I still rhyme, and that I improvise: like Sophocles before his judges when his daughters wished to have him declared incapable of managing his affairs.'

## V

The administration finally grew tired of my remonstrances and of guarding within its walls a lunatic who was so tranquil, peaceful and agreeable, and neither agitated nor brutal, but who simply exaggerated a few mystical exercises. As soon as he had left the asylum, J. G. N. was once more violently seized with mad hatred for his great work, with a rage for destroying his masterpiece; he riddled with letters, visits and questions every one whom he suspected of detaining some portion of this poem.

Warned in time of this excess of autophagy, I began to copy hastily 'The Doctrine of Love,' and was practically ready to return the poet his own manuscript when he reclaimed it from me. In twenty-five years I must have made thirty-two copies. The sly fellow did not leave me free: he exacted my word that I had no copy in my possession. I was as loyal as a man ought to be to a misguided person, while keeping to my intention of preventing the disappearance of a marvel. I did not practise any deception. I demanded three weeks to memorize the work; he granted them to me, not believing in the power of my memory, and I devoted a tremendous time to memorizing these twenty-eight hundred verses. I have a memory wonderful enough to allow me to accomplish this task. I said to the man: 'I no longer have anything material belonging to you.'

'How do you mean?' he asked anxiously.

'I have memorized your verses; they are in my head and for the moment nowhere else. You cannot prevent me from knowing them.'

'You can retain such a mass of insanities in your mind? I am incredulous.'

'Never mind, you are warned: you can never accuse me of felony.'

He reflected a few moments and ended by saying:

'You will now give me your word of honor not to discharge your memory on paper for two years.'

'Well,' I replied, 'your poems will remain in my brain for twice three hundred and sixty-five days — after that I promise nothing.'

'You can never retain these scraps.'

'Console yourself with that hope.'

And he went away less reassured than he wished to appear. He began by consigning to the flames the copy which he had regained with such difficulty; then organized with sagacity a series of traps into which he tried to make me stumble, doubtful, in spite of all, of the veracity of my declaration.

I received in perhaps a week's time a dozen visits from totally unknown people who wished to inquire about the great work of which I had been, of which I was still, they said, the retainer. I did not blunder, I could not blunder, I confined myself to reciting a few fragments to these precious spies whom I never allowed to take any notes.

When the two years had elapsed, I dictated 'The Doctrine of Love' almost word for word.

J. G. N. now tried again by letters and the visits of new inquirers. I no longer replied, except evasively, and by the clear affirmation of an absolute fact: I had memorized the twenty-eight hundred verses.

At this time I had a great many copies made as an increased precaution, so that I might be able, if necessary, to deliver them to the fire.

I did not yet trouble myself about publication, confident of the future; I even lived for many years without speaking to J. G. N., or thinking of the treasure that I guarded.

One day, sitting in the Hotel des Gens de Lettres, my attention was drawn by a discussion which was taking place before the front door. The bristling concierge absolutely refused to allow a beggar of dubious appearance to come up. I intervened —

This beggar was no other than my friend J. G. N., in a get-up which was thoroughly guaranteed to make every porter and dog bristle at sight of him.

'Ah! *mon cher*,' I cried with the deepest emotion, 'here you are.'

'Here I am.'

'I can attribute anything to you, my dear friend, but you must adopt a rational mode of life.'

'I have never had one.'

'And the result is ——'

'I do not complain of the result. The blessed Labré was more destitute than I.'

'Ah! you still march in the orbit of this blessed man?'

'More than ever. He is the Saint of Saints.'

'And food, and shelter?'

'I can live on three hundred francs a year.'

'Well! Well! That is wonderful indeed.'

'Say four hundred.'

'Yes, let us say so —— But to say so, it is necessary to find them.'

'Oh! ——my friends.'

'Are not rich.'

'The ministry——'

'Very paternal, to be sure, but a little indisposed.'

'And Providence. You look as if that was of no account.'

'There is no need of tempting it.'

'I beg, and I am still alive.'

'So much the worse.'

'We are not on earth to have a good living, but to live in goodness.'

'You have the means at hand to serve you.'

'What?'

'Your wonderful volume.'

'A horror! which I have destroyed.'

'Which I have preserved in my memory.'


'Stuff and nonsense!'

'I'll prove it to you.'

'Do not mention it any more.'

'I shall never cease to mention it.'

'Good-night. I'll come back.'

J. G. N. climbed the stairs again a fortnight later, exhausted, emaciated, dying of starvation. 

'I consent at last — if you still find the rhymes fit for anything,' he said to me in a low voice, hanging his head like a man making a shameful avowal of weakness and pusillanimity, 'I consent to the publication of this wonderful book you love so much.'

'Victory!' I cried, transported with joy, 'after twenty-five years!'

'You will give me back the manuscript?'

'I ask a week to dictate it to a secretary.'

A week later I handed J. G. N. the desired copy; he began to read it attentively.

'But,' said he, after a few moments, 'these verses are not mine. I do not recognize them.'

'You are jesting.'

'No, really — I agree, however, to revise them, but it will take me many years. — Malherbe, I have already told you, only made thirty verses a year. — Can I have the presumption to wish to go beyond this model?'

After this declaration, which was equivalent to a refusal, on the advice of the poet's other friends and some of the greatest writers of our time, I concluded that there was nothing to be done in concert with J. G. N. In fact, I possessed his consent to the publication; he had formally given it to me, though not frankly. Then, besides, Rubicons and *coups d'état* have never been able to frighten me.

## VI

You will ask, perhaps, why I have displayed so much devotion and zeal for a work which is not mine. Was I prompted by

friendship for J. G. N.? —In part, no doubt (I should not be truthful if I said *altogether*), there was my fervor for the work, my ardent desire to enrich French letters and the world's literature with an infinitely rare precious stone; my qualities are above all those of a disciple and an admirer, and I admire with all my heart what I consider admirable; old as I am, I have never occupied a position in the first rank, but I have been an incomparable lieutenant-general. Allow me this little bit of bragging! What makes me cherish J. G. N.'s poem is that it is arch-artistic; religious literature is encumbered with so many fiddle-faddles, so many follies, so many Saint-Sulpicerics of every description, without heart, without soul, without art, even without truth, only with a good intention, designed more often to pave Hell than to cause rejoicing in Heaven, that I have been transported with joy at finding mystical poetry worthy of being applauded by the whole of intellectual humanity.

I shall certainly be approved by the whole artistic public: I scorn any other. If Leonardo had only brought forth one work (I shall not even say St. John, but only Bacchus), and if he had subsequently wished to destroy that canvas, would not the recognition of the centuries acquit the man who violated the artist's caprice, and preserved such a work to the world?

Suppose Virgil's friends had not guarded for posterity the marvellous *Æneid* that the gentle poet, considering it imperfect, had destined to the flames! I disdain to plead extenuating circumstances. I boast and am proud of what I have done.

I am more proud of this work of an unknown man which I have preserved than of a hundred works which might have issued from myself. Like the explorers of lost cities, I have stolen and concealed in my heart, to restore them to the sunlight, the jewels of a king who has disappeared. After a battle raging for a quarter of a century against a phantom, one of those embraces of clouds, which Baudelaire speaks of, and which break through your arms, I have saved a marvel from destruction, I have treated it like a goldsmith who discovers a buried treasure under the ground, I have

sorted respectfully the sapphires and pearls, the rubies and emeralds, mingled with clay and dust.

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## PRESCIENCE

BY GERTRUDE LITCHFIELD

O sweet, that I to-day thy love should be,  
And all thy fevered thought of me,— of me,  
Should warm my heart, and fan with passion's flame  
Dull embers there, which wake to burn — and blame!

O sweet, that I for aye thy love might be —  
The end of love like thine could not foresee!  
For had'st thou brought me a less ardent gaze,  
I'd trust thee on and on, nor count the days.

O sweet, did we but love in that calm heaven  
Where kisses are as cool as dew at even,  
And eyes serene as sunset's parting glow,  
Ah then, we'd love aright — prove love — and know!

## FOUR POEMS BY HUMILIS

### I. THE HANDS

**C**HERISH your hands that one day your hands may be fair. No perfume is too precious for your hands. Care for them: thoughtfully cut the grievous nails. No instrument is too delicate for the nails.

It is God who maketh the hands fruitful in marvels. They have taken their snow from the lilies of the Seraphim. In the garden of the flesh they are two flowers of light, and the blood of the rose is under their delicate nails.

A mystical spring doth circle in their veins, wherein the violet runneth, the bluet doth smile: vervains have slumbered in the lines of the palm: the hands tell unto the eyes the spirit's secrets.

The greatest painters were amorous of hands, and the painters of hands are the model painters.

Like two white swans swimming side by side, two sails on the sea melting their heavy pallor, abandon your hands to the water in basins of silver, prepare for them the aromatic linen.

The hands are the man even as the wings are the bird; the hands of the evil ones are desert lands; those of the humble old woman, who turneth a light spindle, make the eyes read a wisdom graven in their wrinkled lines.

The hands of laborers, the hands of sailors show the sunburnt gold of the Heavens under their brown skin. The wing of sea-gulls guardeth the odor of the waves, and the hands of the Virgin a kiss of the moon.

The fairest sometimes engage in the blackest trade, the holiest were the hands of a carpenter.

The hands are your children, and they are twin sisters; the ten fingers are their sons, equally blessed; be watchful over their play, over their least quarrels, over all their conduct to infinite details.



The fingers make nets and from them go forth the towns; the fingers revealed the lyre in ancient times; they toil, bent to the vilest tasks, they are the craftsmen and the musicians.

Loosed in the forest of organs on Sunday, the fingers are birds, and it is at the tip of the fingers that, recalling the flight of the jays from branch to branch, laugheth the familiar swarm of Signs of the Cross.

Serve your hands, they are your faithful servants; grant for their repose a bed of lace.

It is your hands which make a caress here below; believe that they are sisters of lilies and wings: do not despise nor neglect them; suffer them to flower like asphodels.

Carry to God the sweet treasure of your perfumes in the evening, when prayer dawneth on the lips, O hands; and be ye joined for the poor departed. That in the hands God may refresh our fevers.

That the month of fruits may load you with its gifts, open always, O hands, over a nest of pardons.

And you, say, O you, who, detesting arms, contemplate your sadness in the stream of our tears, old man, whose locks go white towards day, young man with the divine eyes where love ariseth, gentle woman blending thy revery with the angels.

Sometimes the heart is swollen at the bottom of strange evenings, and without dreaming that in your hands the will doth flower, you all say: 'Where then, in truth, is the remedy, O Lord, for our ills are extreme?'

— But it is in your hands, but it is your very hands.

## II. BODY AND SOUL

God maketh thy body noble, thy soul delightful. The body doth rise from the earth, the soul doth aspire to the heavens; one is a lover, the other is the beloved.

In the peace of a vast delicious garden, God blew in a little mire a little flame, and the body went forth alone on its gracious feet.

And this breath enchanted the body, it was the soul which, joined to the love of animals and forests, in man did worship God beholding woman.

The soul doth laugh in the eyes and fly with the voice, and the soul expireth not, but the risen body issueth from black slime a second time.

A dart is keen and lightning flashes swift, but the mystic impulse of the soul is such, that the angel's flaming sword doth hesitate.

Suave and fair God wrought thy deathless body: the legs are the twin pillars of the temple, the knees the throne, the bust is the high altar.

The torso's line at its most ample summit, pure flanks of an ancient vase, doth dream and run, in the harmonious order of the lyre.

While an ode to God, in quick diastole, the lyre's heart, in an eternal phrase, doth sing to the heart's low melodious chords.

From the shoulders, sailing from the vase's brim, the head emergeth, an adoring flower, drowned in long, luminous ecstasy.

If the soul is a bird, the body is the fowler. Its look doth burn from the depth of flaming eyes, lit by gentle tears, the oil of sorrow.

Time's measure tingleth in the cloistered temples, the long arms mounting to the firmament, have charitably the steadiness of stairs.

The glowing heart dissolveth in their clasp, as the wine-press doth dissolve the fruit of the vine, and on the folded arms liveth recollection.

Nor fleecy lambs, nor plumage of the swan, nor the fiery mane of the messengers of hunger, efface thy splendor, O glorious crest of hair

Made in the night's dark azure, or fine gold of dawn, o'er which doth float a wild perfume, where woman sootheth man on a boundless sea.

Bright clear nightingale, grave and sonorous beard, trembling

song on the lips' brink, gentle voice! Gentle glory of laughter, blossomy mouth!

Every part of the body yieldeth unto thy laws, Great God, who maketh the earth turn under Thy Sign, in well-ordained succession of the months!

Thy laws are her brisk comrade's sanity, the soul, as a rhythm loveth his running steps, but the soul rejoiceth alone where God abideth.

The body's pain subsideth in decease, but the soul's anguish is the bourneless ocean: they are two gifts one doth not rightly value.

Oh! do not slight thy soul! The soul neglected is dull and pineth, as the mounting daylight, doth wear away the golden crescent's horn.

And the body, scorned by the soul, in ugliness, condemned by God, doth grow emaciated, a banished fool in the corner of a court.

The grace of your soul doth blossom to light in the Word, and the other, in an air fond of cool flights, with vestments light as a soul which soareth away.

Know how to love your soul by loving your body, seek the musical water in baths of pale marble, and the silent wave of genius in strong men's hearts.

Blend your limbs dull with fatigue, where the sunburn of life imprinteth on them his furious kiss, with the cool lamentations exhaled by the Naiad;

So on the coming day your glorious body, lighter than those of the faithful Mercuries, may mount across the sky's victorious azure.

In the wave of genius, at the sure sources of beauty, nakedly plunge your souls, like able swimmers, that they may venture forth with faith, the giver of pinions!

In the night, approaching a dawn's divine red blushes, march by the path of holy practices; be ye patient and grave, white travelers.

Let Chastity, study's delightful sister, labor's tranquil merry young companion, perfume your discourses and solitude.

The pasture of the soul is wholly truth; the body, content with little, garners nourishment in the mystical kiss where beauty reigneth.

Even as God diffuseth man in nature, know how to love it in you, and first be gentle, unto yourselves, and gentle to every creature.

If you love not yourselves in God, love you yourselves?

### III. PREDESTINED COUPLES

Mayhap one day the bridegroom according to love, the bride according to love, according to the order of Emmanuel, without jealousy of him, without jealousy of her,

Their free fingers busy in manual labor, fervent as the day when their hearts were espoused, will nourish in their soul a fire come from Heaven;

The fire of the charming god whom the executioners crushed, the delicious fire of veritable love, with which the souls of the lucid saints are aglow;

Woodpigeon and turtledove, in the height of their mystic tower, will build their nest, over which reigneth chastity, color of dawn and daylight,

Perfect chastity, where the soul doth bathe, that taketh the incense of the soul and the roses of the body, that a lily doth symbolize and a child doth teach;

Which maketh the saints, which maketh the strong, the mysterious law our souls divine when they see the closed eyes and joined fingers of the departed.

Dreaming of Nazareth, under this law divine, they shall dissolve their glances and marry their voices, in the ideal kiss of love the soul doth imagine;

Whether they sleep on a plank or the bed of Kings, the world knoweth them not, and their secret slumbereth better than a treasure hidden under the grass in the heart of the forest.

The night alone doth relate it unto the rosy star; leaving the road to mettlesome cavaliers, in the discreet path where the soul watcheth over them,

They are never two, the warlike number, never two, for love without end doth accompany them, ever *Three*, for Jesus is with them always.

Peaceful pilgrims crossing country and city, where the feet flower with the odor of thyme; and the spouse remaineth a lover, and the Virgin is a companion.

From silken dawn to the satin setting of the sun, their gentle toil smelleth sweet, their pure slumber doth pray from the star of the evening unto that of the morning.

They are white children of the Virgin Mary, rose of the universe by simplicity, and glorious mother of the aching heart.

It is she who doth open for them with marvellous clearness, a book on her knees where their heart doth see its dream, under her mantle celestial and blue as summer.

Humble as Jeanne, modest as Geneviève, the spouse doth spin and dream of the carpenter's lily: the husband doth work and dream of Eve's innocence.

With her hand which is dipped in the ripple of holy water, each day in the Church where her soul doth drink in abundance, whose fingers are eager to turn the leaves of the psalter,

For the poor loves who go onward in trial, the members of Jesus who filled the crowded suburb, for the old man's bed and the habit of the widow,

She spinneth the hemp, she spinneth the flax, as she also spinneth the slumber of the sick, and the innocent laughter of the little orphan.

The heart's golden music which quivereth and persuadeth, her word soweth belief in the evil man, whom she loveth as well as a comrade, and casteth him on his knees.

She is more serious and better than our hearts; he hath only the beautiful thoughts of our likeness; a couple predestined, a delightful husband!

They have joy and they have love supremely! Their hearts are clad in the ecstasy of grace; for they have cast away all violence!

Issuing strong from combats valiantly fought, their body doth ramble about and their soul doth wander in the fair living garden of every virtue.

To be pleasing to the pure beauty which doth claim them, her will is to dwell untouched, even as a fruit, in the virginity natural to woman.

Docile to the golden ray which crosseth his night, listening vaguely to the world which is going to be born, like unto the roar of mighty waters,

Content to love Jesus and to recognize the marvelous meaning of his simple discourses, he doth place in God his heart, his senses, and all his being,

Inhaling the humble flower of his chaste amours, accepting only the odor of the eternal race, gathering not the fruit which rejoiceth always.

For this share grievous to the carnal race, is the share of mystery and the lion's share: it is your future, Lord, which doth fructify in her.

For we are the sons of rebellion; our brows are angry, and our hearts are sullen; and death for us is the law of retaliation.

Son's of Adam's desire under the wings of the night, engendered outside of the law of chaste paradises, we wander over the earth, and draw in our urns

With wines of impurity, Lethe of cursed days; sharing our treasures while filled with covetousness, even as a group of bandits around a table.

But mayhap one day, under the eyes of the Church, will see the husband shine as a pure diamond, and the spouse flower as an exquisite pearl.

And this ideal couple will glow with a sure flame.

## IV. LOVE OF LOVE

## 1

Love well your loves; love you the love who dreameth, with a rose at his lip and flowers in his eyes; it is he whom you seek when your April dawn ariseth, on whom a fragrance doth rest when you are old.

Love you the love who doth play in the sun of colors, under the azure of Greece, around its altars, and who unrolleth to heaven her tresses and girdles, or emptieth a quiver on hearts immortal.

Love you the love who speaketh with the low leisure of *Ave Marias* whispered under the vaulted arch; it is he to whom you pray when your head is weary, he whose voice doth return you the cradle's rhythm.

Love you the love God breatheth over our mire, love you blind love, lighting his torch of flame, love you the love in dream that seemeth like to our angel, love you the love that is promised to the ashes of the grave!

Love you the ancient love of the reign of Saturn, love you the charming god, the hidden god who hung, like a moth of the night, an invisible kiss on the lips of Psyche!

For it is he, whom the earth yet calleth the flame, of whom the human caravan went dreaming, who, tired of wandering, ever seeking a soul, mourned in the lyre and wept on the wind.

Now he returneth: behold his eternal dawn hath quivered like a world in the womb of the night, it is the beginning of the rumors of his pinion; he watcheth over the wise, and the virgin followeth him.

The dream that the day dispels in the heart of women is this God. The sigh that traverseth the woodland is this God. It is this God who twisteth the oriflammes, on the masts of vessels and over the laughing housetops.

He doth palpitate always under the linen tents, under every cry and every secret, it is he whom the lions contemplate in the star-



light; the bird doth sing of him to the wolf who doth howl in the forests!

The spring doth weep for him, for he will be the foam, and the tree doth call him, for he will be the fruit, and the dawn awaiteth him, the gentle terror who will withdraw every shadow and every night.

Behold him who returneth, his reign is nigh! Love you love, and laugh! Love you love, and sing! And let the echo of the woods awake in the rock! Love in the deserts, love in the cities!

Love over the ocean, love on the hills! Love in the great lilies that climb from the valleys! Love in the word and love in the coaxing breezes! Love in prayer and love on the violins!

Love in every heart, and on every lip! Love in all arms, and love in every finger! Love in every breast, and in every fever! Love in every eye and in every voice!

Love in each city; open, ye citadels! Love in the workshops; toilers, on your knees! Love in the convents; angels, beat your wings! Love in the prisons; dark walls, tumble down!

## 2

But adore ye the terrible Love who dwelleth in the dazzling light of future Zions, and whose wound, still open, bleedeth forevermore on the Cross, whose arms open wide unto the nations.



# THE ELFIN GARDEN

BY MADISON CAWEIN

At close of day,  
As once in childhood, through the meadows gray,  
I took my way.

Dim scents of myrrh,  
And twilight gleams of glimmering lavender,  
Led me to her,

That elfin child,  
Who, to her garden, with her beauty wild,  
My soul beguiled.

I seemed to see  
Her eyes, like fireflies, underneath a tree,  
Gazing at me.

She seemed to stand  
Fluttering the moon-moths with a dewy hand  
Across the land.

And, following slow,  
I came into a place I used to know  
Long, long ago.

A place of peace  
Guarded about of many stately trees,  
The haunt of bees.

A garden place  
Of flowers and fruits, wherethrough I oft would pace  
In childhood's days.

Slow-following soft  
An elfin voice, that murmured oft and oft,  
Deep in the croft.

And suddenly  
I saw her there, beneath a blossoming tree,  
A-beckoning me.

And with a smile  
She took my hand and led my soul a-while  
Down many an aisle

Of flowers; and told  
Of many dreams of beauty known of old,  
That now are mold.

And as we walked,  
Along the paths the moonbeams whitely chalked,  
The flowers talked.

A rose-bloom said:  
'He is returned, who thought his dream was dead —  
It *lives* instead!'

Another sighed:  
'He is returned to her,— who was his bride,—  
He thought had died!'

One said, ' 'Tis plain  
She holds him still with all her elfin train  
Of heart and brain!'

And all around  
There grew a whisper, twinkling into sound,  
From air and ground.

It said, 'We've grown  
Into the garden, making it our own  
From dreams here known.

'From dreams, behold,  
With which was changed the darkness of its mold  
To faery gold.

'Making it sweet  
With spiritual messages of little feet  
That here did fleet.

'And still they weave  
Their spells around it.— *He*, too, may perceive.—  
We give him leave.'

And I, at that,  
Beheld a secret place, a violet mat,  
Where some one sat.

A little lad,  
That seemed to have the face that once I had,  
In days not sad.

And then a star  
Fell, trailing heaven with a fiery scar —  
And from afar,—

Glints of the moon  
Showed where the faeries tripped it to a rune,  
A cricket tune.

And as they passed,  
Around the lad their elfin spells were cast,  
That held him fast.

And he was gone,  
Somewhere into the regions of the dawn,  
Where all is wan.

And in my ear  
I heard a voice cry, 'Wake! the dawn is near!  
Why slumber here?'

And, old and grayed,  
Within that garden where, a child, I played,  
I woke — afraid.

# TWO POEMS

BY GEORGES TURPIN

## I. WAR

For days and months the Races were destroyed.  
Under the bleeding sky's dark red horizon  
Death reigned in state attended by rape and famine  
Announced by thunderous roars from the jaws of cannon.  
The fields were ravaged bare by the warring hordes;  
Stark naked corpses stained the flowers in the meadows.  
The red and sticky ground was a cemetery  
Where all these silent foes slept in despair.  
Wandering troops rode onward to adventure. —  
War roamed yet under her silver helmet;  
And fiery, unappeased, in her ancient armor,  
She led away to the combat the last survivors. —

The engines are new: the madness is still the same!  
The soldiers' eyes are terrible and shudder:  
These are the massacrers in swarming butchery;  
Who go to slay to the golden sound of clarions  
Afar one hears the long, loud roar of armies. —  
O God! are there living men who may yet be mangled?  
On! and on their agony goes to the welter  
Crying with all their might: 'We must conquer, or perish!'  
Over them hovers fantastic a human bird,  
An airship whirling mad to a motor's rhythm,  
And all, with eyes upraised to the Zeppelin  
Hurl at the azure sky a terrible clamor. —

Death — Yes, Death is there! They feel her approaching;  
And so in a mighty warmth superb and disdainful,

Scorning the glint of steel and the bounding bullets,  
They mount to the fierce assault in all their knighthood.  
A nameless uproar, sonorous clashing of sabres,  
A snort of iron crashing in helpless bodies,  
And night and day, in the lurid evening or morning,  
The slaughtered soldiers pay their tribute to Glory!

Hear the mournful cry of the hurtling shells  
And the bellowing roar across space  
Of the cannon balls, hungry for human flesh —  
And hark to the warrior song  
Of the black cavalry from the Soudan  
Who charge as a single soul on their chestnut steeds —  
Hark to the piercing wail of the Gatling guns  
Punctuated by rattle of cannon,  
And hark to the proud fanfare  
Conducting cuirassiers and dragoons to the combat.  
The Kings and Emperors in their purple mantles  
Seem turned to stone,  
For over the depth of the heavens empurpled with conflagration  
Infamous war, accursed war,  
War, with a great hypocritical gesture,  
Binds their pale white brows with branches of laurel!

The end at last! Death hath accomplished her task.  
The iron Mower putteth an end to the wounded:  
Diseases are there, appalling carrion-birds  
Who suck the thick black blood of the dead and dying —  
While far away a single survivor is stirring —  
He moves with pain; he is frothing, he is mad;  
He is alone! — He shudders. His eyes seek rest;  
But find nothing around him — only the sea of the dead —  
He is afraid, he feels in his empty belly  
The terrible windy rattle of staring Hunger,  
And becoming a child, in self pity regretting the battle,

He weeps for an hour, his head buried deep in his hands!  
Some one touches his arm — It is War, it is She!  
He is the great conqueror whom She is going to crown;  
But all at once he feels that his brain is cracking,  
And the wound in his mouth stains the laurel branch with blood.——  
And toward the fierce dark sky where the stars are weeping  
His voice mounts sonorous and smothers the hurricane;  
And while the night unfurls her great black sails,  
He shouts his rancor in a wild song of madness:

‘Below, in a hamlet  
I lived with my household,  
Every new springtime  
My boys and girls  
Would sow the clear wheat  
That later, in autumn,  
We mowed, at the moment  
The golden ears shivered!

‘In the shade of the steeple  
Which sleeps on the hill,  
Or near the great rocks  
That the blue sky painted;  
We went in the evening  
Against the rough sea  
To bathe our hopes  
In the marvellous night!

‘We lived in peace  
As our fathers before us ——  
In perfect calm  
For we loved the soil ——  
No lofty dreams!  
Our greatest pleasure  
Consisted, most often,  
In village rejoicings;

'And when the time came  
To go to the grave,  
A tender hand  
Put a seal on our eyelids!  
And in the tomb  
On God's chosen day,  
We went forever  
To sleep under grass.

'Thou hast stolen my peace,  
Thou hast given me glory!  
I am a butcher  
Despising his victory —  
I hate thee, who makest  
The just an assassin,  
Who washeth his hands  
In the blood of his sons!'

Then, his brain drunk with a murderous ire  
And knowing no more where to plant his bloody steel,  
With his bayonet he slashed the red throat of war  
And slaked his awful thirst with her reeking blood —  
And cursing heaven, in sublime delirium,  
He trampled under foot the glorious silken flags;  
And feeling still in his heart the ruddy pulse of his Crime  
Uttered a fearful cry awakening echoes,  
Then as he could no longer find other victims:  
He slew himself and gave up to the Peace of the Grave.

Over the base charnel-ground where crows and vultures  
Whirled aloft in their mournful silent flight,  
Life appeared at last to perpetuate the Races,  
And suddenly unmasking two children who had been spared,  
The Adam and Eve of a great new cycle of grace,  
She joined their two bodies together in a kiss.



## II. THE IRON HIVE

In a corner of the suburb, among grey houses,  
The hive upraiseth to heaven her steely dome,  
And her twenty chimneys which launch on the breeze  
A dull smoke ——

In her womb, the motors explode regularly,  
And the triphammers, mechanical monsters,  
Pound the haughty metals  
Between their maxillaries of energy ——

The creeping straps crawl in the atmosphere  
And layer beams which turn night and day  
Receive with an easy air  
Their daily embrace of love ——

In the red-hot fire of the ovens, in the belly of the boilers,  
Men in labor are stoking the coal  
Which the monsters digest  
In a nameless uproar ——

Fire who devoureth his prey,  
Fire who licketh, Fire who doth writhe,  
Fire who doth laugh, Fire who doth sing, Fire who doth gnaw!  
Fire in the factory is King!

The Hive lives on him, on his immense power,  
And the insect-workman for his flame in madness  
Hath adoration ——  
Even as a choir-boy  
Prostrate during the Divine Sacrifice,  
Near the flaming greedy hearth  
Which grins,  
He prostrates his brow  
And vows his arms to his service ——

In the Iron Hive at the red-brown lungs of the forges,  
The Men of the Future, having abandoned the soil,  
Will come to burn their blood and parch their throats ——  
Woe!

## APRIL DREAMING

BY RUTH McENERY STUART

Impulse of violets wakes the air  
In vestal shade where dozes  
On down of mist miladi fair,  
And when shy sunbeams gem her hair  
She smiles into the rainbow there;  
'Tis April, dreaming roses.

Bright wings of unborn butterflies  
And leaves of daffodillies  
Float gaily through her dreamland skies,  
While dim and white and angelwise,  
On filmy moon-wings softly rise  
The souls of Easter lilies.

# A SONG BEFORE TWILIGHT

BY ARTHUR KETCHUM

Go not, O Summer Day, until thou bless me.  
Give me a dream to keep;  
A silver star for folded hands of twilight  
To take to sleep.

Go not, O Summer Day, until thou send me  
The word I wait to hear;  
That to the darkness I may bring its comfort,  
Held close and near.

Go not, O Summer Day, until thou bind me  
One secret of the grace,  
Of wind and blue and clear light shining  
In a dear face.

Then go, O Summer Day, and of thy splendors  
A votive garland make;  
And crown a festival, remembered,  
For thy dear sake.

## THE BEST OF THE NEW BOOKS

In this list we shall include only such books as in our opinion are really worth while. No extended reviews will be given, only the briefest description. The fact that a book is listed is the highest commendation we can give. These books can be secured of any good bookseller, or they will be sent postpaid by POET LORE on receipt of the published price.

**TEN THOUSAND MILES WITH A DOG SLED**, by Hudson Stuck. An account of the vast snow fields, frozen rivers and rugged mountains of the Yukon country by the archdeacon of the Yukon. Excellently illustrated. (\$3.50 net.)

**THROUGH THE BRAZILIAN WILDERNESS**, by Theodore Roosevelt. Colonel Roosevelt's own narrative of his much-discussed expedition through a part of Brazil never visited by civilized man, including a 500-mile journey on mule-back across the height of land between the river systems of the Paraguay and the Amazon, and a trip down the "Unknown River." The illustrations are particularly interesting. (\$3.50 net.)

**THE CRUISE OF THE "JANET NICHOL."** There can be no greater inspiration and pleasure for lovers of Stevenson and his work than in this diary of his wife, written during their cruise in 1890, with no thought of publication, but, as she says "to help her husband's memory where his own diary had fallen in arrears." (\$1.75 net.)

**THE VOYAGES OF THE NORSEMEN TO AMERICA**, by William Hovegaard, is the first of the Scandinavian monographs. The series is published to promote the study of Scandinavian history and culture, in the belief that true knowledge of the North will contribute to the common profit on both sides of the Atlantic. The book has 83 illustrations and 7 maps. (\$4.00 net.)

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**MOROCCO and SIAM** are the two latest additions to Pierre Loti's notable series of Eastern travel books. It is interesting to read in Loti's dedication to Siam, "I do not believe in the future of our distant colonial conquests. And I mourn the thousands and thousands of our brave little soldiers, who were buried in those Asiatic cemeteries, when we might so well have spared their precious lives, and risked them only in the last defence of our beloved French land." (Each \$2.50 net.)

**LUCA DELLA ROBBIA**, by Allan Marquand. A catalogue Raisonné of the works of Luca della Robbia. The monuments are arranged in chronological sequence, together with their related documents and bibliography. Some of the monuments and some of the documents are now published for the first time. A scholarly monograph. (\$7.50 net.)

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**THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD**, charmingly illustrated by Edmund J. Sullivan in color and black and white, makes a gorgeous gift for boys and girls just growing out of juveniles. (\$4.00 net.)

**NAT GOODWIN'S BOOK**, by Nat C. Goodwin. An intimate and permanent history of the American stage for the past forty years, by the greatest living actor. Illustrated by many rare photographs. (\$3.00 net.)

**RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS OF A JAPANESE ARTIST**, by Yoshio Markino. An interesting volume by the author of "A Japanese Artist in London." Delightfully illustrated. (\$2.00 net.)

**MY PATH THROUGH LIFE**, by Lili Lehmann. Musical and personal memoirs of a great singer that will interest all who have heard her. Well illustrated. (\$3.50 net.)

**THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF OUTDOOR ROSE GROWING**, by George C. Thomas, Jr. Elaborately illustrated with ninety-six reproductions in full color of all varieties of roses. The rose-lover and the rose-grower should be keenly interested in this beautiful and comprehensive book on roses. As a textbook for the amateur gardener, it will at once take a permanent place, both for its practical arrangement and adaptation to ready reference, and for the explicit and authoritative instructions given covering every phase of the subject. (\$4.00 net.)

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# Poet Lore

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EDITED BY

CHARLOTTE PORTER AND HELEN A. CLARKE

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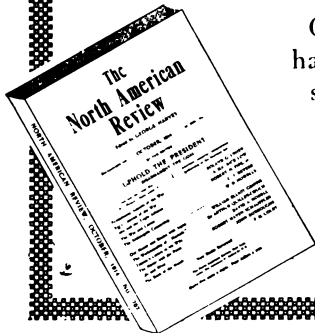
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